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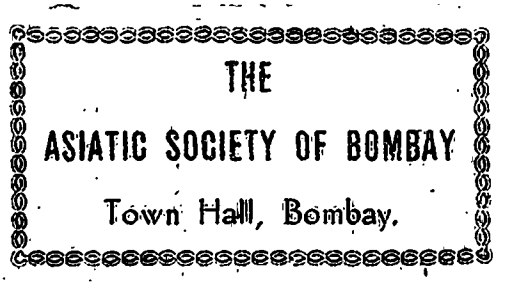

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REPORT

ON THE

LAND REVENUE SETTLEMENT

OF THE

WURDAH DISTRICT,

OF THE

CENTRAL PROVINCES,

EFFECTED BY

H. RIVETT-CARNAC, B.C.S.

1867.

SELECTIONS

FROM THE

RECORDS

OF

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

FOREIGN DEPARTMENT.

NO. LVI.

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LETTERS.

REPORT

OF THE

LAND REVENUE SETTLEMENT

ON THE

WURDAH DISTRICT.

LETTERS.

From A. BLOOMFIELD, ESQ., *Asst. Secretary to the Chief Commr., Central Provinces, to the Settlement Commissioner, Central Provinces,—(No. [illegible], dated Nagpore, the 25th February* 1867).

No. 368, dated 8th February, 1867.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter marginally noted, which reports the final completion of the land revenue settlement in the Wurdah district, forwards Mr. Rivett-Carnac's settlement report, and requests that the settlement may now be confirmed.

2. In reply I am to inform you that the Chief Commissioner hereby confirms the revised settlement of the Wurdah district. The assessments have now been in successful working for three years. The term of the settlement will, under the orders of the Viceroy of India in Council, be for a period of thirty years; and its commencement will date from the 1st June 1863, when the revised assessments came into effect.

3. The Deputy Commissioner of Wurdah should be instructed to intimate to the people, with such formalities as he may think proper, that the settlement of their district has now been confirmed.

4. Mr. Temple further directs me to place on record his high sense of the zeal and ability evinced by the two Settlement Officers, Mr. C. E. Bernard and Mr. H. Rivett-Carnac. The first praise belongs to Mr. Bernard, who took up the work of assessment with much skill and intelligence, and with an energy not surpassed by any Settlement Officer in these provinces. He also disposed of much of the *quasi* judicial business of the settlement in a thorough, searching, and discriminating manner. On Mr. Bernard being transferred to a higher office, the settlement work was taken up by Mr. Carnac, who brought the adjustment of rents, the adjudication of tenures and tenant right, to a satisfactory conclusion, and submitted the records of the whole

settlement together with a full and lucid report. The Chief Commissioner also notices with satisfaction the assistance rendered by Lieutenant S. Brooke, Assistant Settlement Officer in the work of this settlement.

5. The report with your letter* under acknowledgment and this despatch may be printed under your supervision.

* Herewith returned.

From J. H. MORRIS, Esq., *Settlement Commissioner, Central Provinces, to the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces,—(No.* 368, *dated Jubbulpore, the* 8*th February* 1867*).*

I have the honor herewith to forward for final sanction the settlement report of the Wurdah District, together with the prescribed statements noted in the margin, submitted by Mr. H. Rivett-Carnac. This report refers to the Wurdah district according to the old sub-divisions, when it formed a dependency of the Nagpore district, it having been decided, on the creation of the new Wurdah district, that the two settlements, which were then working independently, should be concluded according to the old boundaries. It will also be found, as stated in the introduction to this report, that the Wurdah settlement has, from time to time, been concluded by several different officers, Mr. Ross having performed the preliminary operations of demarcation of boundaries and measurement, Mr. Bernard having made the assessments, and decided the majority of the proprietary right cases, and Mr. Carnac having supervised the adjustment of rents and preparation of the record.

1 General statement in acres in four parts.
1 Annual jumma statement in four parts.
1 Statement of judicial work.
1 Ditto agricultural statistics.

2. Mr. Carnac's report will be found to be ably and interestingly drawn up. He has dwelt at considerable length on all the more important points connected with the settlement, and I need not follow him through them all: it will suffice that, observing the order of his subjects, I advert to such points as more especially require notice.

3. The position of the district and its physical aspect is well described in Chapter I of the report. It covers an area of rather more than 1,600 square miles, of which not more than 300 square miles are comprised in the upland division, consisting chiefly of hill tracts and jungle, and thus leaving some 1,300 square miles for the Wurdah valley, which forms by far the most important division of the district, and which again may be sub-divided into the northern or cotton-growing portion, and the southern less productive tracts adjoining the Chandah lands.

4. In paragraph 14 Mr. Carnac adverts to the geological formation of the district; he has also furnished an interesting geological map, showing the trap and other formations of the tract, to which, as also to his remarks generally, I would beg to draw attention. The existence of so large a mass of trap, and the paucity of good building

stone in Wurdah is remarkable, whilst the paragraphs on the nature of this trap coating, its natural structure, Mr. Hislop's description of its formation, and the composition of the black cotton soil will well re-pay perusal.

5. In Chapter II Mr. Carnac adverts to the Mahratta settlements as made after the annexation of the province in 1853, and thence goes on to show that these settlements, based as they were on the assessments of the Mahratta Government, having proved unsatisfactory, measures were taken for the introduction of a regular settlement, founded on a *regular* survey, and an estimate of the resources of each village. The nature of these measures, the manner in which they were carried out, the difficulties attending them, the agency employed, and the instructions issued for carrying on the work, as also the preliminary operations of demarcation of boundaries and field measurements, will be found so fully described in paragraphs 25—42 of the report, that I need not dwell on them here; but I would beg to draw attention to what is said in paragraphs 43 and 44 regarding the classification of the soil, and to state that, in my opinion, the reduction by Mr. Bernard of the soil classifications from six to three classes was a wise measure, for experience has taught me that too minute a classification of soils does not, as a general rule, work well practically, and is apt to mislead and confuse in all cases where the measurements cannot be thoroughly and entirely depended on.

6. In Chapter III Mr. Carnac enters at considerable length into the former history of the district. His remarks are very full and interesting, and to them I have nothing to add, containing, as they do nearly, all that can be said on the early history of the tract, its aboriginal tribes and early invaders, the various classes by which it has been inhabited, and the different races by which it has been governed; but I would particularly beg attention to the description given in paragraphs 75 to 84 of the revenue system under the Mahratta Government, for it is in a great measure on that system that the regular settlement now under report has supervened, and it is of importance to note the changes which have been introduced, and in what respect that system has not been interfered with.

7. The description given in Chapter IV of the agricultural estates, soils, crops, &c., is interesting, and the existence of 357 uninhabited estates or "reetis" out of 988 villages or mouzahs is well worthy of notice; it is however satisfactory to be able to add that the majority of these "reetis" are off-shoots of some parent village, the cultivators of which, growing too numerous for the village fields, have extended the cultivation, and broken up land in the neighbourhood, and that during the term of the present settlement, it may reasonably be expected that the majority of these "reetis" will become populous and flourishing villages.

8. The account given in paragraphs 87—89 of the cultivation and soils is worthy of attention, and it is satisfactory to note that 65 per cent. of the total area of the district is actually under the plough. I have already alluded to the classification of the soil, and I would here

further add, as stated in the report, that "the classification adopted was one well known and understood by the people, and easily recognizable by the subordinates of the Settlement Department." I would also draw attention to the large preponderance of the best soils, that of the 1st class being 33 per cent. of the cultivated area, and the 2nd class 47 per cent.

9. In paragraphs 90—106 Mr. Carnac notices at considerable length the different classes of produce, introducing at the same time some valuable remarks by Mr. Bernard, the late Settlement Officer, on the important subject of irrigation, to which I would beg attention. The account given of the cultivation of the betel leaf is also very interesting and will well re-pay perusal. The small area of irrigated land, *viz.*, ½ per cent. of the cultivation, and the trifling area irrigated by a well ranging from ¾ to 3 acres to each well, is certainly very striking, more especially when the slight depth of water from the surface and the facilities for irrigation generally which exist in the district are taken into consideration; but as the whole subject has been fully considered in a memorandum lately submitted to the Chief Commissioner, I do not deem it necessary to dilate on it here, though at the same time I beg to record my opinion that many and great advantages would accrue to this and other districts of these provinces by a large and general extension of irrigation.

10. The only crops which seem to call for particular notice are *jowaree* and *cotton*, the former being one of the most important products of the district, so far as home consumption is considered, whilst the latter is not only the most valuable staple of the district, but as an export has materially affected the trade of the whole province. *Jowaree* is very largely cultivated, 39 per cent. of the total cultivated area being taken up with it. It is raised on all classes of soil, and is cultivated in all parts of the district, both for home consumption and for export. In addition to "supplying the food in general use among the people, the stock furnishes the 'kurbee' or fodder on which the cattle depend for the greater part of the year;" whilst the price has of late years risen so enormously that it now forms one of the most important revenue-paying crops of the district. As regards cotton, the Settlement Officer states that, according to the latest returns, the area under cultivation is 27½ per cent. of the cultivated area of the district, and that of this rather less than two-thirds belong to the autumn crop and a little more than one-third to the spring crop. I need scarcely add that it is now cultivated almost entirely for export, and that the cotton of the Wurdah district, commonly known as the Hinghunghat cotton, is very highly prized in both the Bombay and Liverpool markets. *Wheat* is also a very important crop, and occupies nearly 24 per cent. of the cultivated area. It is extensively grown in the rich river villages, and is now selling at such very high prices as to very materially aid the malgoozars in meeting the Government demand.

11. In Chapter V Mr. Carnac adverts to the population, and gives an interesting account of the languages and castes of the people generally. According to the returns referred to by the Settlement Officer, the population of the district would appear to amount to

214,751, giving 133 souls to the square mile, or 3 per house. The above figures can, however hardly be relied on ; and as the Chief Commissioner will probably now have before him the result of the census lately made in these provinces, it will be for him to judge how far the results above given are correct or otherwise. As regards language, there can, I think, be no doubt but the Mahrattee is the vernacular of the district, whilst with respect to castes by far the most important are the Koonbees, who are the best perhaps of all the cultivating classes, and form the bulk of the agricultural population.

12. The subject referred to in paragraph 121 as to the importance of making landlords live on their estates, or else keep a competent agent there, to perform the many important duties which the position of landholders entails, is of importance, and has, I think, been satisfactorily diposed of, for there can be no doubt but that the prosperity of an estate, and *ergo* the punctual payment of the Government revenue, depends very much on the constant attention of the landlords, as well as an intimate knowledge of all details which cannot well be acquired by any other than a resident proprietor or his responsible agent.

13. In Chapter VI. Mr. Carnac treats of the subject of communications, and under this head, his remarks on the line of railroad, railway extension, and the prospective advantages that are likely to accrue to the district on the ultimate opening of the railway to Nagpore, will be found interesting.

Of the cotton roads, the three most important are (1), that which leaves the railway line at Kowtah station, and proceeds in a south-easterly direction through Deolee and Hinghunghat towards Chandah; (2), the southern line which, entering the district at Boree, and leaving it 20 miles below Hinghunghat, connects Nagpore with Chandah, and forms the line of communication between Central India and Hyderabad; and (3), the old Bombay road, which runs nearly parallel with the line of railroad.

In addition to the regular roads above mentioned, there are one or two others of minor importance, and each village is also connected with its neighbour by a well defined plainly marked out track, regularly traversed by the carts of the country and by means of which the whole internal commerce of the district is conducted, so that on the whole the Wurdah district is by no means deficient in means of communication, more especially if the Wurdah river could ever be rendered navigable, on which subject some intelligent remarks will be found in paragraphs 130 to 133 of the report under review.

14. In Chapter VII Mr. Carnac describes the divisions and boundaries of the district. His remarks on the old former pergunnahs and their position, their abolition under new arrangements, the re-arrangement of the tehseel circles and of the boundary between Nagpore and Wurdah, the formation of new administrative circles as they now stand, and the results finally attained are so full and complete, that I do not consider it necessary to do more than refer to them and the sketch map which accompanies the report, and to state generally that the seven pergunnahs of which the district formerly consisted have, under the

new arrangements, been sub-divided into the three tehseels which now form the Wurdah district, or else transferred to the Nagpore district, as shown in the following return :—

Original Pergunnahwar Sub-division.		No. of villages transferred from each pergunnah to tehseelee Hinghunghat.	No. of villages transferred from each pergunnah to Hussoor Tehseelee of Wurdah.	No. of villages transferred from each pergunnah to tehseelee Arvee.	No. of villages transferred from each pergunnah to Nagpore district.
Pergunnahs.	No. of villages in each.				
Hinghunghat ...	158	142	16	...	...
Pohona	103	103	...	...	...
Nachengaon ...	130	...	130	...	...
Undoree ...	100	...	100	...	...
Anjee	208	...	31	177	...
Pownar	134	46	88	...	...
Baila	155	24	9	...	122
Total ...	988	315	374	177	122

15. In Chapter VIII the settlement officer adverts to proprietary rights. The subject is one of very great importance, more especially when treated of with reference to a province where such rights were not formerly recognized, and are now being conferred for the first time, and the settlement officer is therefore perfectly correct in his assertion that "the determination of claims to proprietary right was one of the most important and onerous duties that the Settlement Department had to perform" in the Central Provinces; but Mr. Carnac has in his report entered so fully into the subject, and has described at such length the nature of the investigations made, and the principles which guided the settlement courts in arriving at their decisions, and making their awards, that it does not appear necessary for me to do more than refer to such points as require notice, and state briefly the results finally attained, more especially as I shall probably have to recur again to this subject when reviewing the paragraphs on tenures.

16. It must, I think, be admitted on all hands, that right of property in the soil (as we understand the term) did not exist under the Mahratta Government; it therefore became necessary to bestow proprietary right, and it is, in my opinion, a matter of congratulation that this bestowal was made absolutely, and only subject to the condi-

tion of the payment of the Government revenue. That a large number of claims should have been preferred by ex-lessees is not to be wondered at; but it cannot be denied that very good reasons existed for admitting many of these claims, and that the introduction of the regular settlement afforded the very best opportunity of settling definitely the grievances of the agricultural community. It is also satisfactory to note that the claims of persons out of possession have been entertained with great caution, and that there does not seem to be a single case in which a lessee of 12 years' standing and continuous possession has not received proprietary right in either the whole or part of his estate.

17. The manner in which the lapsed period, *i. e.*, the interval which elapsed between the Rajah's death and the commencement of proprietary right investigations has been treated, is adverted, to in paragraph 150, and is, I consider, correct, whilst the result of the investigations, as shown in the Appendix attached to the report, must, I think, be regarded as satisfactory, and more especially the fact that in only 8 per cent. of the villages of the whole district was possession disturbed by the action of the settlement courts. It also gives me much pleasure to be able to endorse what Mr. Carnac says as to the highly satisfactory manner in which the investigations were conducted, and the care and patience with which conflicting claims were weighed and disposed of; and to state that the late Settlement Officer, Mr. Bernard, is entitled to all the credit which attaches to this portion of the work.

18. The field measurements adverted to in Chapter IX were conducted chiefly by Ameens, aided in some slight degree by the village accountants or Pundiahs, regarding whose training and instruction considerable pains had been taken. The professional survey was also carried on almost simultaneously with the field measurements, and in a statement appended to paragraph 158 of the report will be found the results of the comparison of areas between the professional and settlement surveys. These results may be regarded as fairly satisfactory, though perhaps the difference is greater than might have been expected, considering that the two surveys were carried on almost simultaneously.

19. In paragraph 159 Mr. Carnac treats of the preparation of statistics for assessment and the compilation of the general statement, and then in paragraph 160 makes some remarks on the inspection of villages by the settlement officer, and the general value of inspections, more especially when they follow up and test information already gathered from independent sources, which will be found interesting and worthy of perusal.

20. In Chapters X, XI, and XII the settlement officer describes his data for assessment, entering at considerable length into the subject, and giving in full detail for each tehseel and pergunnah his "*modus operandi*," and the principles which guided him in fixing his jummas and determining on the total amount of revenue which he considered Government entitled to demand. That the data made use of for purposes of assessment were various and obtained from many sources, and that no pains were spared by the settlement officer to obtain correct results and fix moderate jummas, will be apparent from a perusal

of the three Chapters of the report above referred to; and as moreover in these the "*modus operandi*" of assessment is very fully detailed, I do not consider it necessary to do more than refer generally to them, and advert briefly to the general results obtained, more especially as the revised assessments of the Wurdah district were sanctioned and announced independently of me and prior to my assuming charge of my present appointment.

21. The fiscal result of the revision of settlement has been a very trifling increase of Rs. 5,025, or a little more than 1 per cent. on the former Government demand, the total jumma having been raised from Rs. 4,11,930 to Rs. 4,16,345. This proposed assessment, however, includes resumed maafees, and gives a reduction of from 9 to 20 per cent. on the old Mahratta assessments, and as it falls on the whole district at the *average* rate of 0-9-7 per acre on the cultivation, and in the case of no one pergunnah exceeds 0-12-4, it may be asserted without hesitation that the revised assessment is a fair and moderate one and worthy of sanction. I may also state that out of the 988 estates which came under revision of assessment, reduction was granted in 219, and enhancement imposed in 395, thus leaving 374 villages in which no alteration was made, so that the practical result of the present revision of settlement has been a re-distribution and equalization rather than a general raising or lowering of the Government demand.

22. In Chapter XIII Mr. Carnac treats of the record of rights and adjustment of rents. He enters at length into the subject, and gives many details, which show that no pains have been spared to correctly classify and record existing rights of every description, and make the people understand and comprehend their rights and liabilities. It will not be necessary for me to follow him through all the points he has explained, though at the same time there are several which must not be passed over unnoticed by me.

23. In paragraphs 198—214 tenant rights are adverted to, and in paragraph 199, Mr. Carnac shows how all persons formerly holding the position of cultivators may be conveniently considered as belonging to one or other of the three following classes: (1), proprietors of their holdings; (2), tenants with rights of occupancy; and (3), tenants-at-will.

As regards the 1st class, there can be no doubt but that on annexation there were found existing in many estates cultivators who, on special grounds and *quoad* their own particular fields or holdings, possessed as good a title to proprietary right as that which had secured for landholders the same privilege in their estates, and it was therefore only an act of justice to take them out of the category of tenants, and raise them to the rank of proprietors of their holdings. How this was done, the position which was thus assigned, the diversity of the claims preferred, and the principles adopted in deciding these claims, the various classes of cultivators who were found entitled to this position, and the manner in which the Government revenue was assessed on the holdings of these petty proprietors, will be found so fully detailed in paragraphs 200—206 of the report, that I need only refer to them, and

endorse Mr. Carnac's statement that the practical result of this measure was to make a ryotwaree settlement with each of the most substantial cultivators of the Wurdah district.

24. The peculiar cases of cultivators adverted to in paragraph 208 are not in reality so exceptional as they would appear at first sight; indeed, whatever peculiarity may attach to these cases, has arisen from a mistaken idea regarding the rule of assessment applicable to them, in connection with the average revenue rate at which ordinary holdings are generally assessed; but as there can be no doubt that "the revenue rate of a village is not always, nor indeed generally, the real revenue rate payable by the best fields in that village," and as moreover it is clear, with reference to these particular cases, that the proprietor was certainly entitled by prescription to high rate of payment and a certain amount of grain, so I am of opinion that the ruling by which these holdings have been assessed at their full value, and yet the interests of the holders have been protected and improved by the bestowal of proprietary rights, is one that is fair and just, both towards the landlords and the tenants.

25. With respect to the 2nd class, *viz.*, tenants with rights of occupancy, it appears hardly necessary for me to say much. The question of the original existence or otherwise of occupancy rights in the Nagpore province need not be entered on here, having already been fully discussed in the correspondence which has passed between myself and the Chief Commissioner on the subject; it will suffice to state that Acts X of 1859 and XIV of 1863 having been extended to these provinces, the principles therein laid down have been duly observed during the course of settlement operations, also that, as stated in paragraph 212, and for the reasons therein given, there has been a sub-division of occupancy tenants into two classes, *viz.*, those whose right was declared to be absolute, and those with merely a conditional right. The remarks contained in paragraph 213 regarding those tenants whose right of occupancy has been declared absolute, are both interesting and important, and it is worthy of note that, out of the total number of 49,233 cultivators with right of occupancy, there are only 3,160 whose right has, on investigation, proved to be conditional.

26. Of the 3rd class, *viz.*, tenants-at-will, there would seem to be a very large proportion in this district, the total number being 245,162, thus showing that, on an average, there is only one occupancy ryot for every five tenants-at-will.

27. In paragraphs 215—220 Mr. Carnac enters at considerable length into the subject of adjustment of rents. His remarks will, I think, be found full and interesting, and his description of the *modus operandi* clear and satisfactory. It is especially satisfactory to note that rents were left to adjust themselves as much as possible; that the interference of the settlement officer was not often called for; that the parties were encouraged to adjust their quarrels by compromise or arbitration, and that as a general rule, the adjustment of rents went on smoothly and amicably.

28. It is perhaps to be regretted that the practical result of this adjustment of rents was but a trifling enhancement in the total rental, but this result was in a great measure to be expected and can be accounted for without much difficulty; the settlement officer has moreover entered so fully into this portion of the subject, and described so clearly the various causes which militated against a great and sudden rise in rents, that I do not consider it necessary to say more than that I fully concur in Mr. Carnac's remarks, and am clearly of opinion that rents will so go on rising year by year, that in the course of a few years, the recorded rent rolls of the Wurdah landlords will bear, as they now should do, a fair proportion to the profits of the tenants.

29. The remarks in paragraph 221 regarding the position of the different classes of proprietors and cultivators, and the pains which have been taken to secure to each class the particular rights and privileges to which it is clearly entitled, are of importance and well worthy of attention. With a ryotwaree settlement in the adjoining districts of Berar, it may very fairly be asked why a different system was pursued here, and if the change has been in all respects an advantageous one. To this it may very fairly be replied, as remarked by Mr. Carnac, that the system in vogue here is not one introduced or invented by us, but that which we found in force, and were morally bound to uphold; also that although ryotwaree settlement may not have been made, still that wherever a cultivator could make out a good case, he was made proprietor of his holding, so that in reality a ryotwaree settlement has been made with 775 cultivators, holding 20,886 acres of the best cultivated land in the district. I must not also omit to mention that no pains have been spared to secure to all old cultivators the proprietary rights and privileges they are entitled to under paragraphs 14—17, Selection II of the Settlement Code, in all cases where the claim of the malgoozar has been proved to be weak, or he (the malgoozar) has possessed only an occasional and interrupted interest in the estate generally; or in other words, the old cultivators have had the advantage of a ryotwaree settlement in respect to their own holdings, and it would be easy to show that in no other cases have they (the cultivators) the right to demand any such settlement.

30. On the other hand, while protection has been afforded to all subordinate rights really existing, care has been taken to avoid unduly fettering the newly recognized proprietorship of the landlords. Such landlords have generally the unrestricted exercise of their rights; they have full power over their tenants-at-will, and they can also with the occupancy ryots enhance rent, subject only, in event of dispute, to determination by a court of justice.

31. In paragraphs 222—225, Mr. Carnac adverts to the rights of shareholders and the appointment of lumburdars. The manner in which claims to share have been investigated and recorded has proved satisfactory, and very few complaints have reached me regarding the lumburdaree arrangements, so that I have reason to believe that these two important operations have been completed properly and thoroughly.

32. The rent-free and quit-rent holdings in the whole district are but of trifling importance, there being but two entire villages held rent-free by the Rajah of Deor, whilst of privileged holdings, the quit-rent levied from them only falls short of the full revenue assessable on them by Rs. 3,934-5-1.

33. The manner in which the demarcation of excess waste lands was carried out is described in paragraphs 230—231 of the report. The total amount of excess waste reserved in the Wurdah district does not exceed 210 square miles, and with the exception of such as lies near the line of railway is not likely to prove of much value; but it is satisfactory to state that this portion of the work was well done, and having been completed early in the day, has enabled the district officer to carry out his arrangements for duly administering the wastes.

34. In reference to paragraph 232, as to the Putwaree being no longer retained as a Government servant, and the advantages which are likely to accrue from the change in his position and status, I would merely observe that Mr. Carnac's remarks are worthy of attention, and that I am sanguine that the new arrangements adverted to by him are likely to work well and prove advantageous. I would also add that the preparation of the annual papers under the superintendence of the Superintendent and Moonserims referred to at the close of paragraph 233 is now being carried on under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioner.

It is also satisfactory to note that the rights, privileges, and perquisites of village Kotwars have been properly investigated and recorded, and that the revenue instalments have been re-arranged in a manner to conduce greatly to the convenience of the people without interfering with the punctual payment of the Government demand.

35. It will be observed from paragraph 236 that the total cost of the settlement has amounted to Rs. 1,79,954, or 43 per cent. on one year's revenue. This percentage is certainly considerable, and might, under ordinary circumstances, be regarded as excessive; but considering the number of years the settlement operations have been in progress, the costly nature of some of these operations, and the various causes which have tended to impede progress, I am inclined to think that the result is by no means so unfavorable a one as it might have been.

36. It now only remains for me to notice the services of the various officers who served in the settlement. I have already in my 1st paragraph stated in general terms what portion of the work of this settlement has been done by Messrs. Ross, Bernard, and Carnac respectively, and would now add with regard to Mr. Ross, that his services in Wurdah shall be noticed by me in my review of the report of the Nagpore settlement. The most important portion of Mr. Bernard's work was done prior to my assuming charge of my present appointment, and his great merits as a settlement officer are so well known to the Chief Commissioner that it appears hardly necessary for me to dilate on them, but it gives me much pleasure to state that in all his work, Mr. Bernard evinced the greatest practical ability, that all he undertook he did well, that he spared to pains to render the work

accurate and sound, and that in a special degree his proprietary right decisions were models of diligent research and sound judgment. He also evinced much administrative ability in the arrangements he made for carrying on the work.

Mr. Carnac received charge of the settlement from Mr. Bernard in July 1864, and held charge until its close. Though new to the work, he soon acquired a fair acquaintance with settlement details, and bestowed great pains in acquiring a good practical knowledge of his duties. His plans were also forecast with care and judgment; and the settlement has been finally completed in a manner which is very creditable to him; I beg to bring his services to the favorable notice of the Chief Commissioner.

Of the Assistant Settlement Officers, Mr. McGeorge did good services at the commencement of the settlement, and Lieutenants Brooke and Sartorious are favorably mentioned by Mr. Carnac as having materially aided him to complete the settlement.

Of the Native ministerial officers, Superintendent Shunker Lall is reported to have done "his work carefully and ably," and Ram Chunder Pundit to have worked "most heartily and zealously."

37. In conclusion, I beg to submit this settlement for sanction, with a recommendation that it be confirmed for 30 years from the 1st July 1863, the date from which the revised assessments came into operation, and the new jummas have been collected from the people.

REPORT.

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BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

REPORT.

From H. RIVETT-CARNAC, ESQ., *Settlement Officer, Wurdah, to Settlement Commissioner, Central Provinces,—(dated Nagpore, the 1st September* 1866.)

Preamble.

I have the honor to announce the completion of the Wurdah settlement, and to submit a report containing some account of the tract of country that has been settled, and of the principles on which the settlement has been conducted. The usual forms and statements enumerated in the margin form Appendices to this report.

Annual jumma statement.
Statement in acres.
General statement of assessments.

Wurdah settlement by whom conducted.

2. It may be convenient to commence by mentioning the officers by whom the Wurdah settlement has from time to time been conducted.

Officers in charge of the work.

3. When in 1857 the Commissioner of the Nagpore province received the sanction of the Supreme Government to his proposal to introduce the regular settlement into the Nagpore province, a separate department was organized under the control of the Hon'ble Mr. R. S. Ellis, of the Madras Civil Service, as referred to more in detail in Chapter VII.

Wurdah settlement originally included in the Nagpore district.

4. In those days, what is now known as the Wurdah district, was included within Nagpore, and thus the preliminary operations of the Wurdah settlement were conducted by Mr. A. B. Ross, the present settlement officer of Nagpore. In 1862 the sub-division of Wurdah was created, but as it still remained a dependency only, no separate settlement officer was appointed, and the settlement operations remained, as before, under the settlement officer of Nagpore. In November 1862, when the sub-division was advanced to the dignity of a district, the Wurdah settlement was entrusted to Mr. MacGeorge, the then Officiating Deputy Commissioner, who superintended it in addition to his other duties, until 1st April 1863, when Mr. Bernard was appointed settlement officer, Mr. MacGeorge remaining on as his Assistant until July 1863; I succeeded Mr. Bernard in the latter end of June 1864, on his being appointed Secretary to the Chief Commissioner; and have held charge of the settlement up to the present date.

Division of work.

5. As will be explained in detail in Chapters VII, VIII, IX, and X, the preliminary operations of the settlement were performed by Mr. Ross. The assessments were made by Mr. Bernard assisted by Mr. MacGeorge. The work that fell to my share included the adjustment of rents, preparation of the record of rights, and the decision of the miscellaneous cases connected with the winding up of

the settlement. Thus the most important operations of the settlement, and those by which the most intimate knowledge of the people and the district are acquired, were not performed by me. Moreover, during the whole of the period I have been in charge of the Wurdah settlement, I have also had to conduct the active operations of the settlement in Chandah, in which district it has been necessary to spend much time which would otherwise have been devoted to the Wurdah settlement.

6. I feel then that I labor under some disadvantages in reporting on a settlement my connection with which did not commence until the most important operations had been concluded, and which of necessity has been interrupted and brief.

Wurdah settlement according to old Wurdah sub-division.

7. Before giving any description of the tract of country that has been settled, it is necessary to explain that the so-called Wurdah settlement has not been confined to villages of the present Wurdah district. The Wurdah settlement follows the boundaries of the old Wurdah sub-division, which, as mentioned in paragraph 4, was formerly a dependency of Nagpore. Soon after the creation of the new district of "Wurdah," a re-arrangement of the boundary was made, by which 510 villages of the Nagpore district were transferred to Wurdah, Nagpore receiving 122 villages of the Baila pergunnah, formerly included in the Wurdah sub-division. To avoid unnecessary delay and complication in the completion of the records, it was decided that the two settlements which were then working independently should be concluded according to the old boundaries, and thus the settlements of the present Nagpore and Wurdah districts are dove-tailed the one into the other; the so-called Wurdah settlement including 122 villages of Wurdah in the Baila pergunnah of Nagpore; Mr. Ross' settlement in like manner extending to 510 villages of the Wurdah district.

CHAPTER I.

THE WURDAH REGION—PHYSICAL ASPECT OF THE DISTRICT.

8. The tract, the settlement of which I have to report, is situated between 20°—21° 30′ North latitude and 78° and 79° East longitude, at the northern extremity of the great elevated table-land of the Deccan, which, stretching from 18° North latitude, terminates here at the foot of the Sautpoorah Hills. This long and important range sometimes called the Northern Ghauts, which forms so well defined a boundary between Hindoostan and the Deccan, here divides the watershed of the Eastern and the watershed of the Western Coasts. Forming the cradle of many important rivers, the Sautpoorahs and their offshoots act as guides to the infant streams, portioning out a tract of country to each and directing their course on the long journey from the hills of Central India to the sea. In the very bosom of the hills not far from the boundary of the Nagpore district, the Taptee and the Wurdah have their source within a few miles of each other, springing from the piece of table-land of Mooltye. The Taptee led and conducted by the hills follows a western course till it falls into the Bay of Cambay near Surat. The Wurdah on the other hand which rises within a very short distance of the Taptee, is led south, and then east by the hills, which attending it closely regulate all its movements until it reaches the plain near Arwee. Here the hills recede, leaving the Wurdah now a vigorous river to pursue its course towards the Eastern Coast, which under the name of Godavery it ultimately reaches.

Position of the district.

Watershed of the Sautpoorahs.

9. This river which gives its name to the Wurdah district is the chief feature of the tract I have to describe, and forms the boundary of this settlement to the west and south, separating the Wurdah district and the Central Provinces from Berar and the neighbouring territory of the Nizam. To the north, low hills, offshoots of the Sautpoorahs, attend the river, and watch its course to a point near Berool, where taking a sudden sweep, they recede eastwards in the direction of Nagpore, following pretty accurately the northern boundary of the Wurdah settlement. To the east the boundary is formed by a detached line of hills, the natural division between the watershed of the Wurdah and the Wyngunga. This range after skirting the Wurdah district for some miles stretches right across Chandah and approaches the Wurdah just above its junction with the Wyngunga.

Boundaries of the district.

10. The tract included within these boundaries covers an area of about 1,611 square miles, and consists of two well defined natural divisions, the country

Area.

lying along the hills which skirt the district to the north and north-east, and the valley land extending from the base of the hills to the river.

Upland division of the district.

11. The hill tract includes comparatively speaking but a small and unimportant portion of the district, and is formed by a series of spurs and offshoots of the Sautpoorahs, running generally in a southern direction in unbroken, unpicturesque lines of hills with flattened summits and presenting that monotonous appearance common to rocks of trap formation in this part of the country. They attain a height of more than 500 feet above the plain. The height of Gurmusoor, the highest point, is given in the survey maps as 2,086 feet above the level of the sea, which would be about 1,000 feet above the level of the plain. Along the crests of these hills the lands are sterile and jungly, but below in the gorges and valleys, and in the basins between the ranges, the soil is rich and fertile and not inferior perhaps to any in the district. The hill sides are clothed with a low scrubby jungle, and save in the ravines, where cultivation has not yet extended, but few forest trees of any value either for fruit or for timber, are to be met with. On the other hand large supplies of fuel may be drawn from these places, and will be doubly valuable hereafter. Grass is plentiful, and affords abundant provision for village cattle, and some parts of these tracts are used as pasture-grazing lands and breeding grounds by tribes of Gaolees or graziers, who have established themselves in the jungle. In the north-west and north-east of these tracts are situated some considerable blocks of land which having been declared Government property are available for sale under the Waste Land Rules, as will be explained more in detail in Chapter XIII.

Hill tracts and jungle.

Waste land blocks.

The Wurdah valley or the lowland division of the district.

12. The second and more important division of the district consists of the valley lands below the range stretching from the base of the hills to the left bank of the Wurdah river. This tract includes nearly all the country drained by the river Wunna and its affluents, and by the streams that the Wurdah receives on its left from the point at which it enters the district to its junction with the Wunna, near Pohna. Speaking accurately, this tract might be described as consisting of two divisions, the valley of the Wunna and the river lands of the Wurdah, but it will be more convenient to consider it as forming the northern and cotton growing portion of the Wurdah valley as distinguished from the Chandah lands to the south. To the north, as already explained, the hills keep close to the river down to Berool, past that point they suddenly sweep to the east and the valley gradually opens out attaining its greatest breadth at the bend of the river near Saongee. From this point to Boree, which is situated in the extreme north-east of the tract under report, the distance is about 60 miles, and although some diversity of country is met with, the rich village lands being chequered by detached hills and ridges of trap rock cropping up in their very centre, the river sides cut up by water-courses and ravines, still as a rule the country is clear and open, and

may be described as an undulating champaign tract covered with a coating of rich black cotton soil, highly cultivated and abundantly productive. The table-land gradually slopes southwards towards the Wurdah, and as the soil following the upheavings of the volcanic crust beneath lies in huge waves in a direction perpendicular to the course of the river, the drainage is excellent, the rainwater being carried off by streams flowing down the troughs of these waves, and discharging themselves into the Wurdah. The soil, rich and well drained, affords peculiar natural advantages for cotton cultivation, which being carried on here on a very considerable scale has gained for this tract the name of one of the best of the cotton fields of the Central Provinces.

Rivers.

13. I have mentioned that the hills of the district are low. Of the rivers, the Wurdah has already been alluded to, and it will be necessary to describe it more in detail in Chapter VI on Communications. Situated as it is at the extremity of the watershed, this tract does not contain any rivers of very great size or importance. The Wunna, the principal affluent of the Wurdah, contributes a great body of water during the rains, but at other times is an insignificant stream. On its right bank the Wunna recieves the Dham and the Bhore, these two affluents effect a junction near Mandgaon, and then united flow into the Wunna at that place, on its left the Nand,—streams which take their rise among the hills to the north of the district.

The Wunna and its affluents.

Geological formation.

14. Affecting as it does the soil and the cultivation, it is necessary that the geological formation of the tract should be noticed here. I have mentioned how the Wurdah district situated at the very extremity of the Deccan is a sort of border land between North and South India. Here the marked change in the language and the people immediately strikes one, the line between the Mahratta and the Hindi being nearly as clear and well-defined as the line of hills that divides the two races. And here too connected with the change that is to be met with in every thing animate and inanimate, the geological formation suddenly presents a most decidedly different character. The table-land of the Deccan, which from 20° to 21° North latitude is one mass of basaltic rocks forming what has been described to be one of the largest sheets of trap in the world, here suddenly terminates, and the trap formation is as suddenly re-placed by sandstone. I fortunately have been able to procure a copy of a map by the late Reverend S. Hislop, showing the geological formation in the neighbourhood of Nagpore, and from the sketch map which accompanies this report, it will be seen that the south-east and east boundary of the Wurdah district follows pretty accurately the limits of these two great geological formations. Just beyond the Seetabuldee hill, which is but eighteen miles from the northern limit of the Wurdah district, the trap disappears, and near Chicknee, a village only four miles from the boundary of the Wurdah district, the sudden appearance of the sandstone is immediately recognized by the difference in the color of the soil and by the improvement in the road.

15. In most parts of the Wurdah district, this layer of trap is so thick that no trace of the lower formation is discernible on the hills or in the plains, and the whole tract consists of heavy black monotonous trap hills, or else of an expanse of that equally heavy black cotton soil which is the accompaniment of trap. In the north of the Nagpore district near Kelode, columnar basalt is met with, but as a rule there is a great want of good stone and gravel throughout the Wurdah district, and building and road-making labour under peculiar disadvantages. In Wurdah the ruins of the village forts dotted all over the district, and forming a regular cordon along the line of the river, are necessarily of mud, and the village roads are of the same material. But pass the Wurdah boundary and enter the Chandah district, forts of well-dressed sandstone, and roads, and village tracks of hard and crisp metal present themselves replacing the mud forts. The abundance and excellence of the stone in the neighbourhood of Chanda is testified to all along the road by the extensive remains of ancient temples until at last Chandah itself with its city wall of dressed sandstone, five miles in circumference, is reached.

Mass of trap.

Paucity of good building stone in Wurdah.

16. The trap coating which is supposed to be the result of a volcanic out-pouring through fissures and craters which have either since closed up, or have become choked with the streams of lava, is described by Mr. Hislop to be of two kinds, the one overlying, the other underlying. Between these two formations or out-pourings, an igneous deposit is generally found. Below the underlying trap is the sandstone, and beneath the sandstone again the granite, which is supposed to be the base of the whole peninsula, is found.

The trap coating.

17. As regards the manner of this natural structure in which one rock is piled above the other, I cannot do better than quote Mr. Hislop's own words. He says—

Its natural structure.

"It is quite evident that before either of the volcanic rocks were poured out in our area, there had been deposited on the sandstone a stratum which must have been at least six feet thick. Over this there was spread a molten mass of lava, which hardened the surface of the stratum, and itself cooled into a flat sheet of globular basalt about twenty feet thick. After a period of repose the internal fires again became active, and discharged another effusion which insinuates itself between the sandstone and the superior deposit; and accumulating in some parts more than in others through force of tension, ruptures the superincumbent mass, tilling up the stratum and scattering the overlying trap, or raising both stratum and trap above the level of the plain, either leaves it a flat topped hill, or, boiling surge, pushes up its summit, gradually or by fitful effort. In these convulsions the more recent trap, where it has not tilled up the deposit altogether, has generally encroached upon it, entangling some of its fragments, converting the

Mr. Hislop's description of the formation.

greater portion of it into a crumbling vesicular rock, or producing miniature outliers of amygdaloid from materials susceptible of the change."

Neighbourhood of Nagpore valuable for geological research.

18. From being on the very border of the sandstone and trap formation, and from the juxtaposition of trap, sandstone and granite, Mr. Hislop describes the neighbourhood of Nagpore to be one of the richest and most valuable fields for geological research in India. A full description of the geology and fossils of Nagpore is to be found in Mr. Hislop's papers, which have been re-published in the Selections of the Government of Bombay, and which contain most interesting details of his researches and discoveries; but it would perhaps be out of place in a settlement report.

19. I have referred to the trap formation as it gives the character to the district, to the soil, and to the cultivation of the tract under report. The trap rock is covered with a coating of the well known "Regur" or black cotton soil, which, although it varies in depth and in richness, being sometimes choked with a gravelly substance, sometimes mixed up with stones and boulders, is met with almost universally throughout the whole extent of the district. It is to the trap formation according to most authorities that this rich soil owes its origin. By some however it is supposed to be a marine deposit, and it is desirable I think that I should here quote the opinion of one whose profound scientific knowledge and long experience in the Nagpore province, invests the opinion with the greatest interest and value. Mr. Hislop dissents both from Dr. Voysey and from Captain Newbolt, and suggests that it is a sub-aerial formation that has taken place in marshy situations where vegetation abounds. The basis being of silica and alumina, the debris, not of trap, and of other rocks in the neighbourhood capable of yielding them, existing in a locality characterized by the excess of its moisture, and rankness of its vegetation, to which two circumstances, and not to the nature of the original debris, he attributes the blackness of the soil. Dr. Voysey's theory in regard to this soil was that it arose from the decomposition of the trap rock, whilst Captain Newbolt regarded it as a marine deposit. In Wurdah, which is entirely within the trap boundary, the black cotton soil is so universal, and in Chandah where the sandstone suddenly shows itself, the change in the soil and the cultivation is so marked, that the theory of Dr. Voysey which attributes the black cotton soil to the decomposition of the trap rocks exposed to all the vicissitudes of temperature and weather, first split and disintegrated by the heat, then deluged by the rain, and finally washed down by degrees by the mountain torrents into the plains beneath, certainly recommends itself to the observer; and frequent experience has shown that inferior or disintegrated trap broken up for metal and seeming quite hard, exposed to the weather, crumbles up and becomes black soil. In Wurdah, where the soil is watered by the tributaries of the Wunna, which also feeds the adjacent lands washing down periodically the debris of the trap hills where they rise, the basin of the watershed is filled with black rich soil "Regur," and cotton is grown more or less in every village of the tract. But

Composition of the black cotton soil.

cross into the Chimmoor pergunnah, the western boundary of which is the trap range bordering on Wurdah, but which to the east is flanked by the Peerzagurh range of sandstone formation, and the soil and cultivation undergo a marked change. In the villages situated right under the trap hills, the soil is black and rich, and some cotton is grown. In the centre of the pergunnah where the streams (which bear down the debris of the two classes of rock) meet, the proportion of sandy and loamy soil are almost equally balanced, whilst on the east side of the pergunnah under the sandstone hill, the sandy soil predominates, and rice and sugarcane cultivation re-place the broad cotton fields of the western villages. This I think would tend to show that the Wurdah district owes its rich soil, and consequent extensive cotton cultivation, either to the trap hills that partly bound it, or else to the trap formation that underlies it.

20. The soil and the cotton cultivation will however be noticed more in detail in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER II.

ANNEXATION—MAHRATTA SETTLEMENTS.

Annexation of the province.

21. In Chapter III some attempt will be made to describe the revenue system as it prevailed under the Mahratta Government. On the 11th December 1853 Rughoojee III died, and soon thereon the Nagpore province lapsed under British rule.

Summary settlements.

22. The Mahratta triennial settlement made in Fusly 1260 or A. D. 1850 was then drawing to a close, but here, as in the case of all newly annexed provinces, it was considered necessary to make a summary settlement at once, and orders were accordingly issued to the district officers to conclude a three years' summary settlement with the landholders then in possession, all of whom were to be maintained pending enquiry into their title. Before, however, general effect was given to these orders, many of the leases granted by the late Rajah's government fell in, and as they ran out, a summary settlement for three years was made with the then landholders.

The satisfactory nature of these settlements.

23. The summary settlements based on the assessments of the Mahratta government were not satisfactory; and Mr. Ellis, who was then the Deputy Commissioner of Nagpore, soon began to urge the extension to the province of the regular settlement founded on the survey and estimate of the resources of each village.

Emigration to Berar.

24. In 1857 he represented to Mr. Plowden, the then Commissioner, that the existing rates were so high that a tide of emigration was setting in from the Wurdah villages of the Nagpore division towards Berar, where land could be procured on very favorable terms; and he strongly recommended the immediate introduction of the operations of the regular settlement.

Disturbed state of Saugor and Nerbudda territories.

25. No steps however appear to have been taken in the matter until the end of 1857. The disturbances of that year had thrown the districts of the Saugor and Nerbudda territories into such an unsettled state that it was not considered safe to send working parties into the field to continue the settlement operations then in progress in those districts. As the disaffection had not been felt to any appreciable extent in Nagpore, it was determined to transfer the staff of Ameens and Peshkars, and the parties belonging to the professional Survey, then at work in the Jubbulpore and Saugor districts, to this province.

Settlement and survey staff transferred to Nagpore.

26. In February 1857, Mr. Plowden, in communication with Major Erskine, obtained the services of two Deputy Collectors of Settlement, Mr. D. Sinclair and Moonshee Aulad Hossein, and in 1858, Mr. Ellis was appointed Superintendent of Survey and Settlement for the Nagpore province.

Mr. Ellis appointed Superintendent of Survey and Settlement for the Nagpore province.

27. Although Mr. Ellis had thus the superintendence of the operations which were to be extended to all the districts of the province, the attention of the department was at first confined to the Nagpore district. In those days what is now the Wurdha district, was, as already explained, included within Nagpore, and thus it is impossible to give any account of the progress of the Wurdah settlement without trespassing on what may appear to be the ground belonging to Mr. Ross, and without referring to the transactions which followed the establishment of a separate settlement department of the Nagpore province. This however is in reality common ground to both settlements, but I am at this great disadvantage that I have to attempt to describe measures of which I have no personal knowledge, and that I have to depend for my information on either vague oral accounts, or very scanty and imperfect records.

Wurdah district formerly included in Nagpore.

28. Mr. Ellis appears to have been fully impressed with the great difficulties that must beset the settlement in the then newly acquired country, in which former assessments made in the most capricious manner would be but little guide, and he immediately took measures to overcome the chief difficulties that presented themselves. He found that the Marhatta Pandia was very different from the skilled Putwaree of the Saugor and Nerbudda territories, and that instead of the survey being undertaken by the local agency, the settlement Peshkars and Ameens being employed in testing and correcting the work, that the establishment had to be engaged in duties which in the Saugor and Nerbudda territories were performed by the Putwarees. Great pains were however taken to improve such village accountants as were to be found in the Nagpore country, and to induce them to qualify themselves, and in December 1858, Mr. Ellis drew up a very carefully considered scheme for the formation of a really efficient Putwaree agency; selected men were appointed Canoongoes, and the village Pandias all underwent examination as to their qualifications for the appointment of Putwaree. These old village servants were indeed treated with the greatest consideration, and in no case were the claims of a Pandia who showed the least promise of usefulness passed over. Where a man failed, a relation, if qualified, was allowed to take his place, and whilst attempts were made to organise a Putwaree agency which would be of some real use to the settlement department, care was at the same time taken to make the measure as popular and pleasing to the people by providing as far as possible for their incumbents.

Difficulties attending settlement operations in a newly acquired province.

Inefficiency of the Putwarees.

Measures taken to improve them.

29. The Putwarees selected were drafted into a school of instruction established by Mr. Ellis at Nagpore, under the superintendence of Aulad Hossein, whose experience in the Saugor and Nerbudda territories rendered him peculiarly fitted for the appointment. The places of the Pandias who could not or would not qualify themselves were filled by candidates who were obliged to go through a regular course of instruction at the school, and to pass a certain examination.

Putwaree school established at Nagpore.

30. Great care was also taken in selecting men and even in admitting them to the position of candidate, and Mr. Ellis very considerately made it a rule to provide for and give preference to men who had been in the service of the Mahratta Government, and who had been thrown out of employ by the changes in the order of affairs.

Vacancies filled by employés of the late Government.

31. With much forethought too, having in view the prospect of the extension of the settlement to the neighbouring districts, Mr. Ellis caused Putwaree schools to be established at Chindwarra, Bhundara, Chandah, and Raepore, under the direction of the Deputy Commissioners. These establishments were not, however, kept up long after Mr. Ellis' departure, the Deputy Commissioners being of opinion that the system did not work well and the schools were soon closed. Many a settlement officer has doubtless had cause to regret that the arrangements so judiciously made by Mr. Ellis were thus allowed to fall to the ground.

Putwaree schools established in other districts.

32. In the mean time the settlement department, *i. e.*, the Peshkars and Ameens imported from the Saugor and Nerbudda territories, under the supervision of the two Deputy Collectors abovementioned, had broken ground in the villages immediately round Baila, and by 1859, the operations extended to the pergunnahs of Anjee and Undoree included within my charge.

Field work commenced.

33. I have had the opportunity of referring to the instructions issued by Mr. Ellis and by Mr. Ross, who communicated them to their Deputy Collectors during the earlier operations of the settlement, and as these instructions form the basis on which, until the issue of the Settlement Code, the Wurdah settlement was conducted, it will be necessary to refer to these orders here.

Instructions of Messrs. Ross and Ellis.

34. When settlement operations were first commenced in these provinces, it appears to have been the desire both of Mr. Ellis and Mr. Plowden, the then Commissioner, to assimilate the work as much as possible to the plan which had been adopted in the Punjab, and considerable correspondence passed between Mr. Plowden and the Financial Commissioner of the Punjab on the subject. Mr. MacLeod furnished the Commissioner with copies of all the correspondence that had passed in the Punjab, and added many valuable hints. And the principles on

Punjab rules adopted.

which the settlement was first worked in these provinces were, with some slight alteration, adopted to meet local peculiarities, the same as those which had guided the successful operations in the Punjab.

Mahrattì adopted as language of the Settlement.

35. Mr. Ellis appears to have been much impressed with the importance and justice of making Mahrattì the language of the courts of the Nagpore province, and thus with the full concurrence of Mr. Plowden, one of his first orders to the Deputy Collector lays down most emphatically that Mahrattì must be the language of the settlement proceedings. Mr. Ellis lays particular stress on the *popularity* that will accrue to the settlement by the proceedings being conducted, and by all the papers being recorded *in the language of the people*. The whole question, which has since so often been discussed, is of so much interest, that I think I may be excused for quoting Mr. Ellis' letter at length—

Mr. Ellis' instructions thereon.

"I have the honor to request that you will, while engaged in the survey of the Nagpore district, consider that Mahratta, the vernacular language of the Nagpore district, is to be the language of record in all survey and settlement proceedings, and that every paper of importance connected with the survey and settlement must invariably in the first instance be written in the Mahratta language.

"2. I have been informed by the Commissioner of the province that it is his determination to cause the introduction of the Mahratta language as the original language of record with the Revenue Department of the Nagpore district, so that it is to be expected that before long both the record of the rights of every man paying land revenue to the Government, the claims of the Government, and all proceedings arising out of these claims and rights, will be recorded in the vernacular language of the district of Nagpore.

"3. I have entered marginally a list of records which must invariably in the first instance be recorded in Mahratta, and of those requiring translation into Oordu, leaving it to your discretion to have any or all of them translated into Oordu for your own convenience. The fact that all the translations in which the holders of land in this district are concerned are recorded in Mahratta should be generally made known in your jurisdiction. This knowledge will, I am persuaded, greatly increase the interest felt in, and ensure the popularity of the survey operations.

"4. I shall be happy to receive any suggestions you may wish to make regarding these instructions now conveyed to you, and to lend you every assistance in my power to remove or alleviate any inconvenience that may at first result from the necessity of translating a large number of papers into the Oordu language."

Spirit of these instructions duly observed.

36. The spirit of this order has been observed throughout the settlement proceedings, and every paper of the Malgoozar's misl is written in Mahrattì.

Extra labor entailed thereby.

The carrying out of this order has however entailed considerable extra work on the Settlement Department, owing to the manner in which the establishments

were constituted, and this would appear to be the proper place to notice the agency through which the whole of the operations have been conducted.

Personnel of the department.

37. The absence of any competent indigenous local agency must indeed have been the great difficulty with which settlement operations in Nagpore have had to contend throughout. I cannot speak from my own experience so far as Wurdah is concerned for I joined the department late, when not only had the most important part of the work been done, but when the people had begun to get roused to their own interests, and when the Mahratta employés had gained some experience and were able to render some assistance. But at first settlement operations being quite new in these parts, it was necessary to draw all the working establishment from the outside. I have mentioned above that the indigenous Putwarees and Pandias were utterly ignorant of settlement work, and were generally of very inferior calibre. Even where competent men were found, the process of instruction was long and tiresome, nor are the educated Mahrattas of this part of the country, as a rule, well adapted to the many intricate duties of a settlement official, or are they physically fit for the work.

Non-existence of indigenous agency.

38. Thus at first every proceeding of the settlement which has, as it were, to come to such close quarters and to be on such intimate terms with all classes of the people, had of necessity to be conducted through a foreign and not very popular agency.

Foreign agency employed of necessity.

39. The Kayeths and Mahomedans imported from Hindustan did their work well and quickly, but their language being Oordu, the original maps and records made by them were in that language, and the translation of all their records into Mahratta has entailed much trouble and expense. By degrees as the Mahrattas came forward and evinced aptitude, they were drafted into the settlement ranks, but for a long time the Kayeths and Mahomedans were in the majority, and it was so difficult to find a Mahratta competent to fill the place of superintendent, in which, besides judicial ability, considerable personal energy and the knack of managing and getting work out of a large establishment, is necessary. Besides their ignorance of settlement business which at first was natural enough, the character of the Nagpore educated Brahmins at least was much against their success in the Settlement Department:—they as a rule are lazy, clumsy, inaccurate, slow, and dissipated, wanting in physique and indeed in all the qualities which are necessary to constitute a good settlement employé from whom much hard work and exposure is demanded. The Kayeth on the other hand is generally hardy, his meat-diet, and not insuperable objection to liquor, carries him through much hard work and many nasty localities in which a Nagpore Brahmin or even perhaps a Mahratta Brahmin would fall ill at once.

Nagpore or even Mahratta Brahmin ill adapted to settlement work.

40. The Oordu character too being much neater than the Shambling sprawling Modi (the lower or common Mahratti character), the Kayeth was so much superior to his Mahratta compeer, that there were always many reasons for retaining the Kayeths in the settlement. The Kayeth superintendents too liked having some of their own class about them, and no doubt the Kayeths worked the best. I have found this the case in Chandah; indeed I don't think Chandah could have been measured if we had had to depend on indigenous agency for the work. Thus the agency generally used was of necessity foreign, for where indigenous material was available on the spot, it was generally of very inferior description.

The Oordu dialect as compared with the Mahratta.

41. The first step taken by the new department was of course the demarcation of village boundaries. I learn from Mr. Ross that these operations were not attended with any great difficulty. In a letter of Mr. Ellis, it is mentioned that village boundaries were easily recognizable and but seldom disputed. In the highly cultivated parts, where these would be the most important, and the most severely contested, the work was rendered easy by an old and very excellent plan for the prevention of disputes prescribed by the Native government. In such tracts, from the absence of pasture lands and jungle, it became necessary to preserve a certain quantity of land fallow, on which grass was grown for the use of the village cattle. This strip or belt of pasture was always immediately outside the cultivated lands, and as any attempt to plough it up entailed very severe punishment under the Rajah's government, these grass-preserve belts formed the village boundaries. A similar strip, although advancing cultivation has diminished its breadth, is still preserved in the Wurdah district, and being generally planted with babool-trees, more distinctly marked the limits than the stone boundary pillars erected by the Settlement Department.

Demarcation of village boundaries.

42. The boundary work was commenced in 1858 and finished in the Wurdah district in 1861. Not a single boundary dispute has come before me. The number judicially decided since the commencement of settlement operations is 170. The little difficulty experienced and the small amount of opposition shown, whilst this work was in progress, is to be traced of course to the tractable disposition of the people.

Beginning and completion of boundary work.

43. The field measurements commenced in February 1858. One of the most important duties connected with the compilation of the measurement papers, which was of course undertaken at the same time, was the classification by measuring parties of the soils of each field by which the settlement officer had to a great extent to be guided in preparing his assessments. In arranging this classification, local peculiarities, such as the composition of the deposits of which the soil was constituted, &c., had to be considered. Mr. Ellis did not consider that the classification adopted in the Saugor and Nerbudda territories, the

The field measurements.

geologicial formation of which differed from that of Nagpore, could be accepted without modification. He therefore consulted the Revd. Mr. Hislop, whose eminent geological knowledge, and whose detailed acquaintance of the Nagpore district, constituted him an authority on the subject.

Soils of the Nagpore Province.

44. Sir Richard Jenkins in his well known report described the soil of the Nagpore division to consist of—

I.—Kalee—Rich loam.
II.—Kurdee—Loose earth, unmixed with stones.
III.—Burdee—Reddish earth in rocky stratum.

Mr. Hislop noticed that the above classification of soils prevails among the cultivators of the province, and that he had frequently heard these distinctions used by the people. He, however, proposed a further sub-division into six classes:—

I and II Kalee Matee or Kunkur of 1st and 2nd qualities answering to Kalee and Dohlee; III, Murand, reddish earth; IV, Khurdee answering to Seharee; V, Retardee answering to baber; and VI, Burdee Gotard or Putthard.

Reduction of soil classifications.

45. These classifications indicated by Mr. Hislop were, the settlement authorities ascertained, well known and understood throughout the district, and they were accordingly adopted, and are shown in all the early measurement returns. At a comparatively recent date, Mr. Bernard reduced the classes to three. Grouping 1st and 2nd class black soil under one head, Murand and Khurdee were sufficiently near one another to warrant their being classed together; and as the productive powers of Retardee and Burdee are about equal, they were included under the 3rd heading as 3rd class soil. The classification adopted by Mr. Bernard follows, it will be seen, as nearly as possible that described by Sir R. Jenkins.

CHAPTER III.

FORMER HISTORY OF THE DISTRICT.

Early history of the district very little known.

46. Even were it desirable to commence with the deluge, it would not be easy to carry back the history of the Wurdah District to any thing approaching that date. There is indeed hardly any part of India of which until comparatively recently so little has been known, or so little written, as the territory of which the Wurdah district has always formed a part, and which, although included in Mahrasthra, has borne at different times according to political changes the name of Gondwanah, the "territories of the Rajah of Berar;" and its more recent and best known name the province of Nagpore. To the present day even the Bustar country situated to the south-east of the Wurdah district, and of comparatively no great distance from it, is almost a blank on the map of India, and has only recently been visited and described. The general obscurity in which this part of Central India was shrouded even towards the end of the last century may be gleaned from Rennel's Memoirs of a map of Hindustan, in which that distinguished geographer mentions that Mr. Warren Hastings had just authorized a rough survey of the road to Nagpore being made; and the determination of the position of Nagpore, the great central point in the geography of India is referred to, with just a little less enthusiasm that an arctic voyager might be expected to expend on reaching the North Pole, or on the discovery of the north-west passage.

Ignorance of old historians about Nagpore country.

47. In the works of historians of the last century, such as Orme and Dow, this part of the country is hardly mentioned, but if the maps which accompany their works may be taken as a fair index of the knowledge that those distinguished authors possessed of this part of India, then their information must indeed have been scant and defective. For, according to the map which accompanies my edition of Dows' (1792), the square patch marked Berar is bounded by two rivers; on the north is the Soane, rising between Mandoo and Ugein and flowing into the Ganges at Patna. To the south is the "Gang," evidently intended for the Godavery. But this river rising at Nassic and flowing past Deogere (Doulutabad) and Aurungabad forms the southern boundary of Berar, and eventually falls into the Bay of Bengal at Balasore. No towns are marked, but the angle formed by the Sautpooras and that continuation of the rangewhich stretches from Ummurkuntuk to the east coast is clearly shown.

Hon'ble Mountstuart Elphinstone's remarks on the obscurity of Mahrasthra history.

48. The Hon'ble Mountstuart Elphinstone, once the Resident at Nagpore, then the Governor General's Agent at Poona, and lastly Governor of Bombay, than whom perhaps no one had better opportunities, or was more capable

of giving information regarding the history of Mahrasthra, refers in his history of India (page 221) to the very scanty information that is available regarding the early history of the Mahratta country, and mentions that until the time of the Mussulmans but two historical facts are known regarding it. If this is all that could be gleaned regarding the more accessible part of Mahrasthra by such a distinguished authority as Mr. Mountstuart Elphinstone, with his great opportunities of research, it can hardly be hoped to obtain many details regarding the early history of Nagpore and Wurdah, situated at the very remotest extremity of Mahrasthra. A country regarding which little is known and little has been written, affords generally of course a great field for research, and offers a great opportunity for the historian. But even were I able to take up the subject at length, it would be too extensive for a settlement report. To collect really reliable information regarding the early history of the Nagpore province would be a labor of many years, and although it may be possible with the aid of much light which is now being thrown on many of our antiquarian remains to work out that history hereafter, I shall not attempt to do more here than give a very brief outline of the previous circumstances of this part of the country as gathered from authorities such as Sir Richard Jenkins, Grant Duff, and others.

49. I would, however, remark that the geographical position of this tract, and the physical formation of the country surrounding it, is such as to render it the most inaccessible and almost the last visited of any part of India. This then would make any history it has of much more recent date than that of the more favored portions of the continent. For a glance at the map will show that the Nagpore country is situated in the angle formed by the great Sautpoora range which divides Northern India or Hindustan from the Deccan, and by that range which, stretching from Ummurkuntuk to the sea, cuts off Central India from the coast. Nagpore and Wurdah are in a regular *cul-de-sac* formed by these masses of hills and accompanying dense jungle; it is this *cul-de-sac* and these heavy obstacles which cause the black line which marks the railway on our modern maps to stop suddenly at Nagpore. Although engineering skill may hereafter carry a railway right across these mountains to the east coast, still for the present the trunk line of railway is separated from the Nagpore country by the massive barrier raised by the Sautpooras. The early invasions of the Indian continent were all made from the north, and to the invading hordes the natural bulwarks of the Sautpooras covering the Nagpore country to the north with their almost impenetrable forests, their wild animals, and scarcely less savage aboriginal tribes, formed an obstacle which generally turned the course of the invading stream to the west and south, and that course appears to have followed pretty accurately the line of the great road which connects the western coast with Agra and the cities of Northern India, and which crosses the Sautpoora ranges at the "cluses" or gates to the fortress of Asseerghur, which may appropriately be called the key of the pass.

Cause traceable to the peculiar position of the tract.

Nagpore in a *cul-de-sac* formed by mountains.

And by Asseerghur, close to which runs the trunk line of railway, which, passing up the Nerbudda valley, will soon connect the western and eastern coasts, the tribes and armies, which, tempted on by a spirit of adventure or driven back by defeat in the earliest times, appear to have marched backwards and forwards from Hindustan to the Deccan. It always has been the great thoroughfare, and on its line are the marks of the old cities of Ujein and Mandao; of Boorhanpoor still a place of no small importance; and of Deogurh, transformed by its Mahomedan conquerors into Dowlutabad. Nagpore was always off the line, and as it does not appear to have possessed in early days any rich city as a bait to draw an invading army from the high road, the country long remained unvisited and unknown, and when the settlers, who found their way from Hindustan into the south of the Peninsula, began to multiply and expand their territory westwards, even then inaccessible Nagpore was about the last part of India that would be colonized; for to the settlers of the south equally as to those who journeyed from the north, Nagpore was the "ultima thule."

Position of Nagpore off the high road.

50. The early invaders as colonists, from whatever quarter of the compass they might come, would invariably follow the course of the rivers, those earliest and best explorers, who, wending their way through the most agreeable and fertile plains, pick their way cautiously through the most difficult mountain passes and seemingly impenetrable jungles, leaving a plainly distinguishable track as a guide to the explorer. It is along the fertile valleys chosen by the rivers that the first colonists wended their way, and it was on the banks of the rivers, their supporters and guides, that they first settled. But those who reached this part of the country from whatever quarter they came, must have been the most adventurous of their class, for arriving here they had nearly traced many of the great rivers to the source, and had arrived at the very cradle of the great watershed of the centre of India, the Nerbudda and the Soane, the Taptee and the Wurdah, all rising among these hills, which cut off the Nagpore country from the rest of Hindustan. To the west only is the country comparatively open, and from that quarter the country obtained its language and the people their character.

The early invaders.

51. The very remoteness, inaccessibility, and general uninviting character of the country, which caused it to be so little sought and visited by the early conquerors of India, rendered it a safe asylum for the aborigines of the country, who gave way before the advancing armies. As in England the Britains were driven before their conquerors, and took refuge in the high land of Wales, and the remote corners of the island, so in India the Gonds and other aboriginal tribes sought the fastnesses of the range of wooded hills which stretches across the continent. Whether the advancing masses came from the north or from the south, the Sautpooras still formed a common refuge and resort for the displaced aborigines; and amid the mazes of

Nagpore country the asylum of aboriginal tribes.

hills with their tangled jungle, the conquerors, now in possession of the fertile villages, did not apparently consider it worth their while to follow the Ghonds; and there they remained unmolested, and there they are still to be found forming a distinct class from the other natives of this part of the country.

Their distinct classes indicating former circumstances of the country.

52. In the absence of inscriptions, written history, or other recorded data, the several distinct classes of the population are of great help in showing the former circumstances of this part of the country. They lay in fact in different layers one above the other quite distinct, and easily discernible, and as the geologist by an examination of the overlying and underlying strata. is enabled to read the order of the various great physical displacements and geological eras, so can the historian, by the aid of strong contrast that the races exhibit, trace the several revolutions and eruptions that have broken out at different periods in the history of the Nagpore province.

The Ghonds.

53. Taking the jungles and hills as the original foundation, we find next to it and still clinging closely to it the Ghonds. They are, I believe, now generally admitted to be the aboriginal inhabitants of this part of India; they appear to have been early driven out of the fertile country, and only to have kept what no one else cared to dispute with them and the wild beasts. They were destined later however to rise again and to play an important part in the history of the country. In many places the Ghond strata, so to speak, has been preserved almost untouched, and the people are not much more advanced or very different from what they must have been when first driven into the hills. In physiognomy, in language, and in character they are quite distinct from their Hindoo neighbours. The Ghond language itself, by which I mean the few original words in use among the Ghonds, bears I believe, no resemblance to the Mahratti and Hindee dialects. It belongs in the main to the Dravidian family; but the original language must of necessity have been poor. The words in use amongst these wild people would not be more numerous than the few ideas and wants of their savage life. In communication with their more civilized neighbours, the Ghonds have learnt new wants and have imbibed new ideas, to express which new words have been borrowed and engrafted on to the original Ghondee. But these words belong to a borrowed foreign coinage, and are only used when a Ghond goes into foreign parts, they do not circulate at home. The Ghonds have much, in common with the Bheels and other wild tribes, to be found on the branches of the ranges of hills in which they themselves live, and from Captain Tanner, Royal Artillery, who had been much among the tribes on the Scinde frontier, I learn that the Ghond language resembles in some particulars the dialect current among tribes on the north-west frontier of India. Their existence in large numbers in this part of the country where for the reasons already given they were left unmolested, early gained for it the name of Ghondwana. By the natives of the Kanarese country, their habitat, Dr. Wilson mentions, was called the

"Gondarondan or wilderness of the Ghonds," rendered in Reeve's Kanarese Dictionary as "a waste desert on the way to Benares." I have also Dr. Wilson's authority for mentioning that no tribes appear under the designation of Ghonds in the ancient Indian literature, although he says "it was early known that various barbarous tribes, as they were esteemed, were to be found in the country south of Vindhyan hills. They are mentioned by name in some of the Puranas or at least in some of the appendages of the Puranas as well as in some of the Hindoo Caste List." Dr. Wilson is also inclined to think that the Ghonds are the "Ghondalœ" referred to in Chapter VII of Ptolemy's Geography. The Revd. Mr. Hislop, who possessed considerable knowledge of this strange people, associated, Dr. Wilson says, the designation of Ghond as equivalent to that of the kindred tribes the "Khonds," making the meaning "hill men." The following extract from a recent paper by the Revd. Dr. Wilson on the subject will be of interest as bearing on this question. He is, he writes, "much disposed to view the pastoral "Gavalis" or "cattle-keepers" of the Deccan and certain other castes as the "Guravas" (also cattle-dealers as indicated by their name) in charge of the temples of Shiva, and the Patharavatas or stone-cutters who much resemble them in color and general physiognomy as their representatives at the present day. The "Gavalis" are universally viewed by the natives as the representatives of a quondam ruling tribe, to which various ancient architectural remains are everywhere attributed. To their tribe probably belong some of the isolated Nilghiri races; we cannot be absolutely certain that the Ghonds (or Ghondas) in the neighbourhood of Nagpore are not another (very large and important) body isolated from them. "Govinda" in Sanscrit means a "cow-keeper," and this through the well known form "Govind" may have been the origin of the name Ghond. The physiognomy of the Ghonds need not be appealed to in bar of this supposition, for that physiognomy varies according to the habitat of the Ghonds in forests, on mountains, and on plains, and according to the quality of food used by them from generation to generation; neither need the Tamiloid character of the language of the Ghonds be alluded to in bar of the supposition, for the language of the Brahmins west of the Indus in the country intermediate between India and Persia is cognate with the Tamil. These remarks however were more designed to excite than to satisfy enquiry. The Nagpore society had certainly the best opportunities of prosecuting that enquiry."

Dr. Wilson's opinion regarding origin of Ghonds.

54. Regarding the Ghonds and their country, the historians of the last country do not say much. They seem to have entertained a religious horror of these savages and their no less wild home. Writing of them in 1780, Orme says, "There is in the mountains a wild inhabitant whose bow a European can scarcely draw, who subsist by their incursions into the neighbouring plains, and who, without the ferocity of the American, possess all his treachery; and according to Mr. Thevenot, "India has had its cannibals in the centre of one of the most cultivated parts of the empire."

Mention of the Ghond by Orme.

55. The map which accompanies this work is as wild as that of Dow's history regarding the boundaries of Berar and the direction of the neighbouring rivers. Referring evidently to the Ghonds, Professor Wilson, in his introduction to the Mackenzie papers, says—"all the traditions and records of the Peninsula recognize in every part of it a period when the natives were not Hindoos," and, adds Mountstuart Elphinstone "the aborigines are described before their civilization by the latter people as foresters and mountaineers, or Goblins and Demons," and Rama when in order to re-gain his queen Sita led an army to Ceylon, through the Deccan, he is described as assisted by the King of the Monkeys, who reigned in these parts, and by whose aid he obtained a complete victory over the Giant Ravanah. It really does not require any great sketch of the imagination to put down the wild Ghond of the woods as a Demon or a Monkey, and for such he was no doubt taken in those days by people advancing timidly through a country covered with dense forests and dark overhanging hills, the whole scenery of which was enough to inspire vague apprehensions and to give rise to the idea that it was haunted with preternatural beings.

Professor Wilson's reference to the Ghonds.

56. The people who first displaced the Ghonds would appear to have been a nomadic race of a Scythian origin. There are found all over the old Nagpore province remains of the druidical character, similar to those discovered in Europe, and it would appear that that great displacement which drove the Scythian tribes to Western Europe, also caused a section of the same race to move to India and the south. The remains of the places where they buried their dead are discovered all round Nagpore and Wurdah, to the south in Chanda they are numerous, and they are also met with in Southern India. Mr. Hislop thus describes their burying places—"The vestiges of an ancient Scythian race in this part of India are very numerous. They are found chiefly as barrows surrounded with a circle of stones, and as stone boxes which when complete are styled kistvaens, and when open on one side cromelechs. The cromelechs are now found empty, the kistvaens, if they have not been disturbed, contained stone coffins, urns," &c.

The Scythians.

"The tumuli are also rich in antiquities. In one at Takulghat, south of Goomgaon in 1850, I discovered an iron vessel, now in the Bombay Asiatic Society's Museum. The ashes which had been put in it were covered over with chips of pottery. From another, west of Gungapain, a friend of mine dug up a stone mallet and a number of carpenter's tools.

"It is very desirable that researches into these interesting remains should be prosecuted. The nearest tumuli to this is not far from the Police lines at Taklee. The nearest of any consequence with which I am acquainted are those of Gungapain. The most numerous are those of Takulghat, where there must be fully one hundred. I know about thirty localities where such barrows occur around Nagpore and Kamptee, the nearest cromelechs are at Bewapore beyond Oomrair.

They may have been kistvaens, for they have evidently been disturbed, some of the sandstone slabs which have been moved out of their places are very large. The surface of one of them is beautifully marked with the ripple which must have been imprinted on it, when it lay as loose sand on the margin of a sea or lake. In Chanda district there are fifteen villages to south and east of Mhool which have two cromelechs each in their vicinity. At Chamoorsee, east of the Wiengunga, there is a group of 20 kistvaens or cromelechs, I don't know which.

Mr. Hislop on Scythian remains.

57. It is natural enough that this nomadic people with their flocks and herds should have been the first to penetrate to these wild regions, grazing their cattle in the jungle in the rich valleys. Tradition which gives also to the Ghonds their proper position as aborigines, recognizes a time when a great Gaolee dynasty flourished, and the remains of a great city said to have been the capital is pointed out near Pownar. In all probability, they would not have interfered much with the Ghonds, when the latter had returned to the jungles; the Scythian herdsmen, remaining in possession of the valleys and the best lands bordering on the hills and jungle, could well afford to spare the wilder and less accessible part of the country to the Ghonds and Tigers. It is not easy to fix the date of the Scythian occupation, but I have the authority of the Revd. Dr. Wilson for stating that it cannot have been less than five hundred years before the Christian era.

The Scythian and Gaolee the same.

58. But this people was again to be displaced by the Hindoo colonists. The Scythians and Ghonds probably held their own for many years in their holds, when all the country around it was populated by Hindoos. We know of great Hindoo dynasties existing on all sides; yet no mention is made of this part of the country. To the north, there was the great kingdom of Vicramadity in Malwa. To the south, where the dominions of the king of Andra, whose family was of very great antiquity; to the east, the Chutteesghur country must have been peopled by Hindoos at a very early date, as the remains and inscriptions found in the Ruttunpore country testify, and then on the west towards the kingdom of the Chulukyas with Callian as its capital, and still nearer to us Deogurh which with its rock temples, and those of Adjunta, prove the presence of Hindoos in the country surrounding "Gondwannah" at a very early date; but from its inaccessibility and peculiar *cul-de-sac* position already mentioned, Nagpore would still be the last part of India visited by colonists, whether pressing forward from the north or from the south. The Scythians were probably not displaced in and about Nagpore until two or three centuries before the Christian era. Conquered, they were absorbed by degrees into the lower castes, and are still to be traced amongst the Gaolees. The marks of very old Hindoo temples are found all along the river banks and in many parts of the district. They are generally rough blocks composed of slabs of stone piled one on top of the other. No arches are built, no mortar is used. The natives will tell you that they

The revival of the Hindoos.

Hindoo remains.

were built in days when there were giants, accounting for their existence by a similar process which gained for the masses of stone buildings found in Europe the name of Cyclopean remains; and indeed when one looks at the large old blocks, it is a matter of wonder how they were ever got into their places. To re-arrange them would even be a tough job now-a-days to the best Executive Engineer with all his modern appliances. Tradition ascribes the temples of this peculiar type which are found all over the country to one Hunwan Punt, the person referred to, according to Professor Wilson (see his introduction to the Mackenzie papers) was the Dewan of a Rajah of Deogurh. It is possible then that the first Hindoo conquests of this part of the country was from the west, and that Nagpore may have been a dependency of the Rajahs of Deogurh. It is also mentioned that the dominions of the king of Andra extended to the Nerbudda in the north. But even if he possessed the open country, it is, I should think, extremely doubtful whether he had any real dominion over the Ghonds and their wilderness, who most probably, in the hills at least, always maintained independence. The boundary of the Nerbudda to the north could possibly have been assigned to this kingdom, inasmuch as the only recognised kingdom to the north did not claim to extend beyond that limit, and as no other prominent kingdom was known to exist in the intervening country, the Andra king claimed a boundary and a sovereignty over a tract, the nominal possession of which no one cared to dispute with him.

Mahomedan invasion.

59. In their turn the Hindoos were to fall before the Mahomedans. In A. D. 1294 the Mahomedans from Delhi invaded "Mahrasthra," and by degrees the whole of the country came under Mahomedan sway. In A. D. 1317 Deogiri was taken, and the kingdom of the Rajah, a Hindoo of the Yadu family, subverted. This must have brought the Mahomedan comparatively near to Nagpore. But again Nagpore would be the last place to feel the great revolution which ended in the extension of Mahomedan sway over the whole of the Deccan. That the Mahomedans penetrated as far as this at an early date is possible, but there would not have been much to attract them here, or detain them when they once got here. Curious enough the coins of Ala-a-uddeen, the first conqueror of the Deccan, are very common here, and he may have penetrated as far as this, or the existence of these coins here may be the result of some chance find.

Re-appearance of the Ghonds.

60. Still this is certain that the Ghonds who had been left unmolested in their native forests, took advantage of the great struggle between the Hindoos and Mahomedans, and about this time successfully attempted to re-assert their authority. Watching from his fastnesses high up in the hills the conflict between these two great races, the Ghond waited for his opportunity when both these powerful adversaries were worn out with fighting, and swooping down carried off his share of the prey, the possession of which was the cause of the quarrel. As the Hindoo power decreased, the Ghond, came to the surface. The Mahomedans at first at least had too much to do with their more powerful adversaries to spare time to subdue the Ghonds, nor would it have been worth their

while to disturb the Ghonds, so long as they contented themselves with holding an out-of-the-way part of the country, hardly worth fighting for; and by degrees the people who for years had remained in the hills, hardly daring to show themselves in the plains, recovered part of the fair country they had once possessed; and Ghond kingdoms, including something better than rock and forest, were established. The Rajahs of Kerrla Deogurh and Gurramundela are known to history, and in Chanda too there was a Ghond kingdom.

The Ghond Kings of Deogurh.

61. The Ghond kingdom which it is necessary to mention in this report is that of Deogurh. The various mountain strongholds of this family is not very far distant from Nagpore. The first Rajah of this race, of whom much is known, is Bukt Boolund: Sir Richard Jenkins in his well known report mentions that this Rajah reigned in 1700 A. D.

Bukt Boolund, the first Ghond Rajah.

62. From the commencement of the 18th century, the history of Nagpore is indeed pretty clear, Sir Richard Jenkins has brought it down from this date to his time (1826), and I shall not attempt to do more than give an epitome of the events as he relates them. Bukt Boolund's kingdom would appear to have included the whole of the Wurdah district; indeed the Mahomedan historians hardly pretend to include it in any of its Soobahships; the Hon'ble Mountstuart Elphinstone tells us that the boundary of the half kingdom of Imad Gholu dynasty of Berar did not include Nagpore, although it extended across the Wurdah, and embraced part of the Wurdah district. Thus the Ghond maintained a semi-independance, though we find that they paid tribute to the Emperors of Delhi; and Sir Richard Jenkins tells us that an officer resided at Nagpore to collect the chout, which was paid into the treasury of the Foujdar of Pownar (in the Wurdah district), then the chief seat of the Mahomedan Government to the east of the Wurdah.

His allegiance to the Emperor of Delhi.

63. Bukt Boolund was wise in his generation, and was in good terms with the Delhi Emperor Aurungzebe. Preferring to deal with the Emperor direct, and expecting more consideration at his hands than from officers nominally dependants of the Emperor who held the provinces bordering on Nagpore, Bukt Boolund went to the fountain head, professed his allegiance and turned Mussulman. This obtained for him the support of the Emperor and secured his position. The family of the Ghond Rajahs of Nagpore are Mahomedans to this day.

Chand Sooltan. Ali Shah. Rughojee Bhonsla. Boorhan Shah.

64. Chand Sooltan succeeded Bukt Boolund, and on his death the Government was usurped by Ali Shah, Bukt Boolund's illegitimate son. The widow of Chand Sooltan then called in aid from abroad. The Bhonslas of Berar, afterwards to be famous in the history of this part of the country, were invited to assist. Rughojee came to Nagpore, put Ali Shah to death and set Boorhun Shah on the throne. This occurred in 1738, but the Ghonds paid for this assistance with their kingdom.

65. We have seen first the Ghonds, then the Scythians, then the Hindoos in possession of this part of the country. Then again we have had the nominal reign of the Mahomedans, the Ghonds taking advantage of the struggles between the two races to re-establish their kingdom, though professing a nominal allegiance to Delhi. But the Mahomedan power was now on the decline, and with it was to fall the Ghond kingdom of Nagpore.

Fall of the quasi-Mahomedan kingdom in Nagpore.

66. Whilst Bukt Boolund was enlarging and establishing himself firmly in his kingdom, a power was growing up to the west which was again to assert Hindoo supremacy in Nagpore. It would be out of place in this report to give any detailed account of the rise of the Mahrattas to power—this has been done by Grant Duff and many others, and full particulars are to be found in their histories; I shall therefore content myself with giving a very brief sketch of the history of the Nagpore branch of the Bhonsla family who played an important part in the celebrated Mahratta confederacy.

Revival of Mahratta power in Nagpore.

67. Mr. Jenkins writing in 1828, when events were comparatively fresh, mentions that the early history of this branch of the Bhonsla family is obscure. They do not, he says, pretend to trace their origin above Moodhojee, the great grandfather of Rughojee above-mentioned. Moodhojee's sons were contemporaries of the great Sewajee, the founder of the power of the Mahrattas, when their country was subjugated by the Mahomedans; the families of note found employment in the military and civil departments under their Mussulman conquerers. Even during the time of what may be called the second reign of the Ghonds, many of the high administrative appointments were held by Mahrattas, who were also employed to carry on whatever there was in the way of correspondence or accounts, for the Ghonds lacked education and many qualities necessary to carry on a government. As the commander of bodies of free lances, which took a prominent part in the wars which were constantly recurring between the rival princes of the Deccan, the Mahratta chiefs had many opportunities of learning practically how to command bodies of men. How the great Sewajee turned this to account in the middle of the seventeenth century is well known to history. Rughojee the first was one of the Mahratta generals entrusted with the collection of the chout or Sirdesh-mahee in Berar and Gondwanah. Like many generals in command of a large army at distances from head quarters, he soon arrived at independant power. Arriving at Nagpore, nominally for the purpose of arranging the disputes between the Ghond reigning family, he soon obtained part of the territory as the price of his assistance; between 1740-50, Rughojee conquered Cuttack and obtained the concession of the chout of Bengal. In 1743 we find him nominally the "protector" of the Ghond kingdom of Nagpore—the forms of the Ghond Rajah's authority being kept up, and a certain share of the collections being given to him. But the reign of the Mahrattas in

Arrival of the Mahrattas at Nagpore.

Nagpore had begun; the descendants of Bukht Boolund were treated with great consideration by the Mahratta Court, and the Ghond Rajah still resides at Nagpore, and receives a handsome stipend. In 1745 Chutteeghur was added to Rughojee's conquests. Chanda followed in 1749. The strong fortress of Gawilgurh in Berar, which, until the battle of Assaye, was a stronghold of the Mahratta Rajah of Nagpore, and the deposit of his treasure was made over to Rughojee by a Ghond chief in 1755, in which year, Rughojee, known in this part of the country by the distinction of "the great," died.

Ghond Rajah deposed.

Demise of Rughojee I.

68. On the death of Rughojee I, a dispute arose between two of his sons regarding the succession to the throne. This eventually entailed some fighting, and a reference to the Court of Poona. A compromise was effected; Janojee was confirmed as Senah Saib Soobah, and Moodhojee received Chanda, Chutteesghur, and part of Berar as his patrimony. Janojee's reign is remarkable for his march in conjunction with Nazim Ali, the Soobah of Berar upon Poona, and the sack of that city in 1763. His subsequent perfidy resulted in alliance between the Nizam and the Court of Poona for the purpose of punishing Janojee. The allied armies marched through the Wurdah district in 1765, and laying waste the adjoining country, burnt Nagpore, and indnced the submission of Janojee to the Court of Poona; the Senah Saib Soobah, in the treaty that was susequently concluded, fully acknowledging his dependance on the Peishwa.

Contest of the throne on the death of Rughojee I.

Janojee I.

69. Janojee died in 1772, and his death was the signal for another struggle for the kingdom, Moodhojee was away, and his absence was taken advantage of by his brother Sabajee, backed by the chief officers of the State to usurp the Crown. The Peishwa sided with Sabajee, and a war between the brothers followed, which, after the battle of Akola in 1773, when Moodhojee was defeated, ended in a compromise, the widow of Janojee adopting Rughojee, Moodhojee's son; Moodhojee and Sabajee jointly carrying on the Government.

Struggle for the throne on Janojee's death.

Battle of Akola.

Compromise effected.

70. This arrangement as might have been expected did not last very long, and was again broken between the brothers. The battle of Panchgaon near Nagpore resulted in Sabajee's death, and a complete victory to Moodhojee. It was during Moodhojee's reign that communications were opened between the British and the Court of Nagpore. Mr. Elliot was sent as ambassador to Nagpore in 1777. Friendly communications were kept up between Mr. Hastings and Moodhojee. Moodhojee died in 1788, but not before he had visited Poonah, and obtained the sanction of the Peishwa to his aiding Mundla, and the country north of Nagpore, as far as the Nerbudda, to his dominions.

Battle of Panchgaon.

Moodhojee.

Communications of British Government with Nagpore.

71. Rughojee, his son, succeeded him. In his reign the Nerbudda part of the Nagpore territory which had been withheld from Moodojee through the influence of Sindia was added to his kingdom, Hoshungabad being taken by storm in 1798. Rughojee obtained possession of Mundla, and Chaoragurh during that and the following year, and Tejgurh was given up to the Rajah of Saugor. In 1799 a British ambassador was accredited to the Court of the Rajah, the officer selected being Mr. Colebrooke. The correspondence which took place between this officer and the Supreme Government is the very oldest of the many old records preserved in the Residency at Nagpore. I have had the opportunity of perusing them, and they are full of interest as illustrating the peculiar custom of those days, and the terms of which a British ambassador stood with the Native Court at the end of the last century. The object of Mr. Colebrooke's deputation was to induce the Rajah to join with the Nizam, the British Government and the Peishwa in an alliance against Tippo, and of forming a counterpoise to the danger apprehended by the rapid rise of Sindia. Seringapatam fell while Mr. Colebrooke was the ambassador at Nagpore, and a copy of his letter in which he describes the effect of the announcement of this news to the Rajah is preserved among the old records; but Rughojee was not inclined to join the British against Sindia.

Rughojee II.

Mr. Colebrooke accredited ambassador.

72. It was soon after this that the alliance between Rughojee and Sindia was effected, which held good until dissolved by the defeat which their armies sustained at the hands of the British at the celebrated battles of Assaye and Argaum. Gawilghur also fell to Major General Wellesley, many of whose autograph letters are to be found amongst the Residency records. By the treaty of Deogaon, Rughojee lost Cuttack and Berar, the latter being returned to the Nizam, and undertook to submit all his differences with the Nizam and the Peishwa to the British Government. This treaty also stipulated that a British Resident should be stationed at the Rajah's Court, and in 1804 the Hon'ble Mountstuart Elphinstone arrived at the Residency. For the next few years the history of the Nagpore province is made up of accounts of the ravages of the Pindarees who extended their raids to this part of the country. The accounts of their doings in the Wurdah district alone would fill many pages, but it is hardly necessary to refer to them here at length.

Alliance between Rughojee II and Sindia.

Battle of Assaye.

Peace of Deogaon.

73. Rughojee dying in 1816 was succeeded by his son Pursojee. This Prince was half imbecile, and accordingly more struggles for the regency arose. The British Government then represented by Mr. Jenkins favored the pretensions of Moodojee Bhonsla, generally called "Appah Saib," the only son of Rughojee's younger brother Venkajee, and a treaty of alliance between Appah Saib and the British Government was concluded at Nagpore on

Pursojee I.

Appah Saib.

the 20th May 1816, which provided for the entertainment of a subsidiary force at Nagpore. In January 1817 Pursojee died, poisoned by Appah Saib, as is generally believed, and Appah Saib or Moodhojee succeeded to the "gadee" or throne.

His treaty of alliance.

74. His good behaviour was not of long duration; his treachery brought about the celebrated battle of Setabuldee fought on the 26th and 27th November 1817, which was the foundation of British success at Nagpore. The immediate result of this success was the capture of the city of Nagpore, after which followed immediately the treaty of Nagpore, of which I here quote the terms from Sir Richard Jenkins' report—"That he should cede all his territories to the northward of the Nerbudda, as well as certain possessions on the southern bank, and all his rights in Berar, Gawilghur, Sirgoojah, and Jushpoor, in lieu of the subsidy and contingent; that the civil and military affairs of his Government should be settled and conducted by Ministers in the confidence of the British Government according to the advice of the Resident; that the Rajah with his family should reside in the palace at Nagpore under the protection of the British troops; that the arrears of the subsidy should be paid up until the final transfer of the above-mentioned territories had taken place; that any forts in the territory which we might wish to occupy should immediately be given up; that the person whom he described as principally resisting his orders should, if possible, be seized and delivered up to the British Government, and that the two hills of Seetabuldee with the bazaars, and an adequate portion of land adjoining, should be ceded to the British Government, which should be at liberty to erect on them such military works as might be deemed necessary."

His treachery.
Battle of Seetabuldee.

75. By this treaty the territory of the Rajah of Nagpore was shorn of some of its most valuable possessions; British troops were garrisoned at Nagpore, and a British force under General Hardyman was sent to ensure the terms of the treaty being carried out. Appah Saib again raised every sort of difficulty, and at last intriguing with Bajee Rao, he attempted once more to oust the British from Nagpore. But the 17th April 1818 saw Bajee Rao's army defeated near the Wurdah by Colonel Adams, and the success was immediately followed up by our troops by the storm of the city of Chandah, which fell on the 18th May 1818. Appah Saib was arrested, but he managed to make his escape to the Mahadeo Hills, and there joining with parties of Ghonds, Pindarees, and Arabs, gave trouble for some months. In 1819, however, he fled to Hindustan, and being now formally deposed, a successor to the throne of Nagpore was selected by the British Government in the person of a grandson of the late Rughojee. This child according to Mahratta custom was formally adopted by the widow of the last Rajah, and ascended the throne on the 26th June 1818 under the name of Rughojee III. As he

Fall of the city of Chandah.

His formal deposition.

Rughojee III.

was but a child, it became necessary to establish a regency at the head of which was his grandmother Baka Baee. The real regent however was the Resident, the distinguished Sir Richard Jenkins, and it was under his supervision that those admirable arrangements were made for carrying on the administration of the country with the assistance of British officers, which will ever be gratefully remembered by the people of the Nagpore province.

The interregnum.

76. These arrangements are so fully discussed by Mr. (afterwards) Sir Richard Jenkins in his report which has now been re-printed, that it is hardly necessary to refer to them at length here. The country was divided into districts or countries, at the head of each of which was placed a British officer or superintendent whose duties closely resembled that of a Deputy Commissioner now-a-days. The Resident exercised a general control similar to that of the Commissioner appointed to the charge of the province after the death of Rughojee III. Each pergunnah had its kamaishdar and native ministerial staff somewhat inferior in class, but exercising the same powers as the Tehseeldars and "Amlah" of our day. The administration of the country by these British officers continued until A. D. 1837, when Rughojee III coming of age, the British Superintendents were withdrawn, their places being taken by the native Soobahs appointed by the Court.

The Mahratta revenue system.

77. This would appear to be the proper place to notice briefly the revenue system under the Mahratta Government,—the system on which the settlement supervened. That system is very fully described in Sir Richard Jenkins' report, and as that report has now been reprinted and is available to the public, it is only necessary to refer here to a few points which are closely connected, more or less, with the operations of the settlement.

The village system.

78. In this part of the county, the revenue system that prevailed under Mahratta rule was what is termed the "village system" as opposed to the ryotwaree system; that is to say, instead of settling direct with the cultivator, the amount to be paid on each holding, the Government assessed the sum to be paid on each "village" or estate; and to the Patel or head man of the village, who had all the risk of collecting, belonged the sum he succeeded in collecting from the cultivators in excess of the sum which he, the Patel, had to pay to Government. Care was taken by the Government Assessing Officer not to allow this percentage of the Patel to be more than 15 per cent. on the gross collections of the village.

The Patel.

79. As the head of the village community, the Patel exercised many rights and enjoyed many privileges; and he generally had the collection of certain admitted dues or taxes, a share of which went to him. He also had many opportunities of collecting certain private "cesses" not perhaps recognized, but regarding which a tacit understanding existed between Patel and ryot.

80. Once a year each Patel submitted a rent-roll or lagwan containing the list of his tenants, and the amount paid by each on his holding. This paper was the basis of all the Mahratta assessments, and partly guided by this paper, the Mahratta revenue official prepared to squeeze out from each Patel as much as he could possibly pay.

The rent-roll or lagwan.

81. The villages or estates were settled with each Patel for a certain number, generally, three years. The existence of proprietary right in these estates was not admitted, and the incumbents were liable to be turned out of their village at the pleasure of the Rajah if he wished to make way for any one else, or at the instance of the assessor, if he could discover any one who was willing to pay a higher sum for the village than that which the incumbent was prepared to give. The villages thus frequently changed hands, the holder or farmer being often the highest bidder without reference to his former connection with the village.

Non-existence of proprietary right.

82. To assist the Patel in the general administration of the village was a staff of village officers and servants resembling pretty closely, I believe, those found in village communities in Upper India. Of these the most important was the village Accountant or Pandia, a person holding a position similar to that of the Putwarees of Upper India. This person prepared the village lagwans or accounts. Below the Putwaree again were the village servants and artizans—from the village Kotwar, who has been appropriately termed "the village drudge," to the carpenter and other artizans, and the joshee and astrologer found only in the large and more important villages.

The Pandia and other village servants.

83. Above the Patel and Pandia to each pergunnah, were pergunnah officers termed Deshmooks and Deshpandias. The Deshmook was to the pergunnah very much what the Patel was to the village; and the Deshpandia was a Pandia on a large scale. As in the villages, the Patel was originally a working practical Koonbee, and the Pandia a shrewd Brahmin, so in the pergunnah, the office of Deshmook was generally held by the leading Koonbee of the neighbourhood, a selected Brahmin being Deshpandia. At one time, these Deshmooks were the zemindars of the quarters in which they resided, *i e.*, the Government instead of asssessing the revenue, village by village, made an assessment on the pergunnah, the Deshmook collecting and getting his share of, or percentage on, the profits. The Deshpandia was apparently originally the Deshmook's right-hand man and secretary, but having the advantage of education, whatever gap there may at first have been between their positions has been made up by the Deshpandia, who soon became quite as powerful, if not more so, than the Deshmook. The Deshmooks and Deshpandias are still termed "zemindars" by the people, and of this title they are very proud. Certain allowances or "Russum" were originally enjoyed by these pergunnah officers, who also held maafee lands in virtue of their position as Deshmooks and Deshpandias.

Deshmooks & Deshpandias.

Liberal arrangements have recently been sanctioned by the Supreme Government for these landholders, who are still much looked up to by the people.

The Kumaishdars, Soobahs, Chitnawees, and Phurnawees.

84. Over the pergunnahs again were the Kumaishdars, and each district had its Soobah or Native Deputy Commissioner, by whom the settlements were made, and who went through his district for that purpose every three years. At head quarters were two important officers, the chitnawees and the Sudder Phurnawees. The Chitnawees was a most important officer; he was indeed chief secretary to the Rajah, and in the Revenue Department he had immense influence and authority, and to this perhaps may be attributed, the large number of valuable villages held by Madho Rao Gunghadur, the chief Chitnawees. The Phurnawees was also an important officer in his department; he had the arrangement and checking of all the accounts, and as financial minister, he also possessed considerable authority.

The Phurnawees as financial minister.

The Rajah and his Council.

85. The conduct of affairs at Nagpore was superintended by the Rajah himself and a sort of Council chosen from amongst the leading men of his Court, by whom appeals were heard on all questions, and by whom the arrangements and administration of the Soobahs were checked.

CHAPTER IV.

AGRICULTURAL ESTATES, PERGUNNAHS, SOILS, CROPS.

Division of the land into villages or estates.

87. The number of estates into which the district is divided is, it will be seen, 983. The area of the district has already been said to be 10,31,083 acres, or 1,611 square miles, which would give to each estate or village an average area of 1,044 acres, or one and half square miles. These separate estates or properties are generally termed "villages," in which term is included not only the collection of huts, the residence of the cultivators, and usual quota of non-agricultural population, but also all the land contained within the village boundaries. These villages or mehals vary in size in different parts of the district. In the highly cultivated and more valuable localities, the estates being small compact blocks; to the north, and midst the hills, the so-called villages, consisting of extensive unculivated jungle tracts used for grazing cattle, boasting of no human habitation, save the temporary huts of the cowherds, situated deep in the jungle. Even some of the well cultivated estates of the district have no village sites. Estates of this description are called "Muzrahs." They number altogether 357, and are sometimes marked by the sites of deserted houses whose inhabitants have forsaken them to take up their quarters at some more favored spot in the vicinity, from which they come daily to till the fields of the Muzrah. More generally, however, those uninhabited estates are dependencies or offshoots of some parent village, the cultivators fo which, growing too numerous for the village fields, have extended the cultivation and broken up land in the neighbourhood of the parent village, at which they still reside, though many perhaps hold no land whatever within its limits.

Uninhabited estates.

Kusbah or market villages.

88. To each circle of 10 or 12 villages, forming their common centre, is some place of higher rather pretensions than its neighbours, at which the weekly market is held. This is called the "Kusbah," and as some small amount of trade is carried on here, the population not being limited to agriculturists, is more numerons than that of the adjoining villages. In the same proportion to the "kusbahs," as the "kusbah" is to the smaller village, is the town, the old pergunnah head-quarters, which, from associations, has still some importance in the eyes of the inhabitants, and generally boasts of an old mud fort, in which the Deshmooks or Deshpandias of the pergunnah reside. But apparently the pergunnah towns and the kusbahs have for many years past been falling off in importance, and as they decline,

Old pergunnah towns.

the adjacent villages improve, so that village kusbah, and pergunnah town are by degrees approaching one level, the villages profiting by the decline of the towns, the one rising in proportion as the other falls. This is, I think, to be attributed to the change in the times. The "kusbah" originally did not owe its importance to the small amount of trade carried on there, so much perhaps as to some advantage of position which constituted it a convenient place of rendezvous in troublous times. In days when a visitation from the Pindarees, or some other lawless band from across the river, was no very extraordinary occurrence, the agriculturists were obliged to flock together for purposes of mutual protection and defence, and sacrificing convenience to safety, to take up their quarters at some central spot, at perhaps a considerable distance from their fields. Thus large gatherings-together of agriculturists deserving the name of town became dotted at considerable intervals over the district. The villages were comparatively few, and the country indeed was a country of towns, traces of the importance of many of which are still to be seen. But times being now peaceful, the necessity for crowding together no longer exists, the large gatherings of agriculturists are breaking up, and the cultivators are taking to living as near as possible to their fields, and what were once small hamlets are now flourishing villages. The time and trouble saved to the cultivator by living near his work is great, and tending as it undoubtedly will to the extension of cultivation, the more equal distribution of the population over the country is a subject of congratulation. These remarks do not of course apply to commercial towns which owe their importance to local trade. Of late years, from many circumstances, the tendency has been to concentrate trade at one or two noted marts. Thus, though the number of fine agricultural villages is large, those worthy of the name of towns are few, and the Wurdah valley presents the appearance of a succession of fine villages closely dotted together at regular intervals. In localities which afford advantages for irrigation, and where the soil is economised, each tenant cultivating carefully a small plot of irrigated ground, the village lands can conveniently support a large body of cultivators, agricultural villages almost deserving the names of towns are still to be found. Such a case is Alipoor in the Pohna pergunnah, famed for its irrigation and the large number of wells in use there. This village boasts of 1,362 resident tenants. The total population is 3,391. Mandgaon, a village in the Hingunghat pergunnah, may also be instanced as having 520 resident tenants and a populantion of 3,340 inhabitants. Alipoor, however, is far above the average size of a Wurdah village, which generally supports about 140 cultivators.

Their decline.

Causes of this.

Corresponding improvement of the villages.

89. The appearance of a Wurdah village, although it differs much from what one is accustomed to see in Lower Bengal, resembles, I believe, the villages of the Upper Provinces and the Punjab. In Lower Bengal, the only part of India I had seen before I came to these provinces, the village homestead is hidden from view amidst a mass of

dark foliage, the smoke curling above the trees, being the only sign that what appears to be only a very fine grove, contains also a thickly populated village. In the Wurdah district, although succeeding generations of Hindoo landholders have not omitted to perform what they consider to be one of the most important duties of their lives, and have planted fine groves of trees on their estates, these trees are generally at some distance from the village. Along the banks of the river the villages are landmarks and can be seen from a great distance. They consist generally of groups of grass-covered huts, clustering round a mud fort, perched up on some high commanding spot, selected originally as much for protection against the raids of the Pindaries and other robbers as against the attack of the equally aggressive and treacherous stream. The cultivators live in small mud cottages thatched with grass, for even the constant fires have not yet taught them to use tiles. Save in the larger towns, the only brick building will be the temple erected by some former landholder in honor of the particular deity venerated in that part of the district, and perhaps the house of the landholder himself, which, however, is generally of the same class as those of his tenants, only rather larger and better looking. Where ruins of an old mud fort are still standing, the Patel or landholder and his family cling to it affectionately, living in grass huts built within its limits. The villages are open, the streets tortuous and narrow, and almost impassable in the rainy weather, when the cattle continually passing and re-passing trample the path into a mass of mud. The cultivation in the fields immediately around the village homestead is careful and good, the manure can easily be carried there. These fields are generally held by the landholder as his private farm.

General appearance of a Wurdah village.

90. Here too irrigation, if there is any, will be found, the well and the small plot watered by it being generally near the village site. As the village centre is left, the fields are less sought for and less carefully cultivated, not perhaps that the soil is inferior, but the distance to which the plough-cattle have to be driven and the manner carried tell against the out-lying fields, and here too the crops are more exposed to the ravages of the herds of antelope, which abound in the open cultivated tracts. The harm done by these animals to the young wheat and other produce is very great, and nearly every field is marked by a raised platform or "machan" on which sits a watchman armed with sling and volleys of abuse to scare away antelops, wild pigs and other destroyers of the crops. As you proceed north towards the neighbourhood of the hills, these "machans" or platforms rise higher and higher; indeed they are the barometers which mark your approach to the jungle, and indicate that panthers and tigers are among the visitors to be expected by the watchman during the night. On the borders of the jungle the villages which in the valley are open and unprotected are strongly stockaded with bamboos and brambles, the cattle sheds being some times flanked with a platform for the watchman who protects the cattle from the attacks of tigers, or the still bolder panthers, which have been known to fall upon and carry away bullocks from their sheds in the very heart of a village.

Cultivation.

91. The area actually under the plough in the Wurdah district amounts to 694,713 acres, or 65 per cent. on the total area of the district. To assist the settlement officer in fixing the assessment of the Government revenue on each estate, the Settlement Department caused a careful and elaborate classification of the lands to be made. The classification adopted was one well known and understood by the people, and easily recognizable by the subordinates of the Settlement Department.

Area under the plough.

92. In the brief remarks made in Chapter I on the geology of the district, the well known black cotton soil or "Regur" has been referred to. This soil is the great characteristic of the district, it is on this soil that the best crops are raised, and to which the Wurdah district owes its prosperity. The settlement statistics show that 227,557 acres, or 33 per cent. of the cultivated area of the districts, is covered by this valuable and highly productive soil, which, in the phraseology of the Settlement Department, is called soil of the "first class." The depth of this black coating varies from fifteen feet to a few inches, and in judging of the quality of the soil the depth has, of course, been taken into consideration. The coating must be at least two feet thick to enable it to obtain the rank of black cotton or first class soil. This is the most valuable soil in the district, it commands the highest rent, and is never allowed to remain fallow. Although the manure the landlords can spare is not a tithe of what the lands should have, yet first class soil never appears to be exhausted. It is to be remarked that this class of soil is most common in the pergunnahs lying along the banks of the Wurdah river.

Classes of soil.

Black cotton soil.

93. What is known as soil of the second class consists of what the people call "Morand," a reddish soil composed of gravel and loam, a mixture of the two caused by the continual action of the rain and the ploughshare which have brought up some of the subjacent gravel and grit to the surface. This class is most common on the summits of the elevated wave-like ridges that stretch down towards the Wurdah, and is found lying side by side with the rich black cotton soil, which is indeed but a thicker coating of the other, accumulated in the bosom of the waves between these ridges. This class of soil amounts to 329,499 acres, or 47 per cent. of the cultivated area of the district.

Gravelly or soil of the second class.

94. Class III consists of what is called "Khurdee" or "Seharir," a loose soil containing small stones. One hundred eighteen thousand and one hundred and seventy-seven acres, or 17 per cent. of the cultivated area of the district, consists of this class of soil. Under heading fourth class soil have been grouped "Returdee" or "Baber," a sandy soil found in low situations and generally given up to jungle, and Burdee, or stony ground, occurring in elevated situations and covered with jungle. Soil of this class is found chiefly in the north of the district amid the offshoots of the Sautpoorahs. The area

Soil of the third and fourth class.

of this class of soil under the plough is small, amounting to 15,297 acres only, or 2 per cent. of the total cultivation. There is indeed so much good land available for cultivation, that inferior soil is never touched, unless it can boast of some great advantage of situation to compensate for its sterility.

Classes of produce.

95. Closely connected with the classes of soil are the different crops. They indeed are dependent on and follow the classes of soil. The most important in detail, although they bear but a very insignificant proportion to the other produce of the district, are the crops raised by irrigation. The irrigated area amounts to 4,163 acres, or a little more than half an acre per cent. on the cultivated area of the district. Tank irrigation is unknown. The sites for reservoirs are not numerous, owing to the small extent of hill country, which, with its entanglement of ravines and gorges, generally affords the greatest facilities for the construction of artificial lakes. What irrigation there is is from wells, and is to be found chiefly in a few villages of the Anjee and Nachengaon pergunnahs, where enterprising Mallees and Telees having dug wells cultivate small garden plots close round the village sites. In these gardens, native vegetables in small quantities are grown. The crops raised are opium, the betel-leaf (Pân), turmeric, and sugar-cane, all of which require very careful cultivation. They return however a high profit, if the season is not altogether unpropitious. The vegetable raised are sold in large quantities at the weekly markets, and are of the ordinary descriptions, most liked by the natives. The cultivation of the popp has, it is believed, extended of late years, and gives sign of still further development. I learn from Mr. Bernard that a few loads of opium from the valley of the Wurdah found their way to the Indore scales a short time ago, and that the opium was considered to be equal to the Malwa drug.

Irrigation.

Crops raised by irrigation.

Opium.

96. Betel (Pan) cultivation is confined to a few villages of the Baila and Anjee pergunnahs. The cultivation of this leaf, which is so much used in this part of the country, is peculiar, and a short description of it may be of interest. I am indebted for the facts to my Assistant, Lieutenant Saurin Brooke, who has made enquiries on the subject. The pan leaf is cultivated by a class of people called "Burehs." and the pan garden is "Bureja," or sometimes "Pan ka tanda." The plant is very delicate and susceptible in a higher degree of the influence of heat, light disease, &c.; great care and watchfulness is, therefore, necessary in rearing it. If, however, a good crop is obtained, the profit is fair and sufficient to compensate for the anxiety of two years of watching. The plan gardens are generally held by a cultivating brotherhood of old standing, forming quite an independent section in the village, who pay their rent to the landholder through the head of their body. A portion of the village lands is recognized as belonging to this caste, in this they dig wells or tanks, make their gardens, and being careful and steady

The betel leaf.

cultivators contribute much to the general prosperity of the neighbourhood. The pan garden is enclosed on all sides with a bamboo and mat covering to shield the delicate plant from the weather and cool plantain leaves and the graceful wide-spreading leaves of the Arun, which shelter and support the young plant, are massed within the walls. The interior of these gardens is strikingly pretty and inviting, the pan leaf carefully trellised in all directions, the broad leaves of the plants grouped beside it, affording a grateful shade, whilst the constant supply of water renders the garden agreeably cool, even in the hottest weather. These spots are fully appreciated by tigers and panthers, which often seek shelter here during the hot-weather, and the cultivators on going to their work not unfrequently find one of these animals entangled in the maze of the trellised plants. The leaf is planted in ridges, varying of course in length with the area of the enclosure. After the leaf is planted, the ridges or drills are measured, and the garden is found to contain a certain number of units of length called "Lani," which are portioned off among the brotherhood. The betel leaf requires constant care and much water. Manure too is essential. When young and delicate, the plant is even fed with milk, which is found to be an excellent manure. It ceases bearing leaves of any marketable value in two years. New gardens are then made. The first year of cultivation is called "Wotuk," and the second "Korwa," the produce of the latter being much more esteemed and sought after, and fetching a higher price than the leaves yielded by the first year's crop. At the expiration of the second year or "Korwa," the ground is allowed to remain fallow for periods varying according to the nature of the soil from two to three years. The betel-growing brotherhood are so careful, and are so much respected, that landholders allow them many privileges that are not granted to the ordinary race of agriculturalists. Thus custom has prescribed that no rent is to be paid or demanded during the time the land remains uncultivated. Rent too is only paid on the exact quantity of land sown, *i. e.*, the rent is paid per "lani," the rate on which varies in the first and second year of cultivation. Although all the members of the brotherhood or caste give their labor towards the construction of the garden, share in the expense of watering, weeding, watching, &c., yet at the same time each individual is the *owner* of a fraction of either one or more lanis, the produce of which he himself gathers and disposes of on his own account, and each has an independent interest in the undertaking. The rights and privileges of the pan growers have had to be very carefully enquired into in preparing the settlement record, and a more detailed account of their position towards the landholder will be found in the chapter on tenures.

Manner of the cultivation.

97. The area irrigated by wells ranges from ¾ to 3 acres to each well. The Persian wheel is unkown, the irrigation is carried on in a tedious, uneconomical manner, by means of a pair of bullocks and the well-known "mote" or leathern bucket. The wells and their advantages are in fact not made the most of, the cattle are worked but half the day, and the whole system of irrigation is as yet primitive and

Uneconomical system of irrigation.

imperfect. When it is added that the water-bearing strata afford excellent advantages for irrigation, being within fifteen or twenty feet of the surface, from which it is generally separated only by an easily worked soil, the small area of the irrigated land is very striking. The subject was fully considered by Messrs. Ross and Bernard, and their opinions and conclusions were submitted to the Chief Commissioner in a memorandum written in 1864. Among other reasons for the extent of irrigation being so limited, they explained that, in consequence of the liberal annual rainfall and the character of the black cotton soil, which contains a large proportion of clay, and retains the moisture longer than the soils of other parts of India, irrigation is not so absolutely necessary here as in the arid plains of the North-Western Provinces and the Punjab. The soil supplying him with sufficient to provide for all his wants, the cultivator has but litttle inducement to incur expense and trouble in irrigation. Moreover the unsettled state of landed tenure has, up to the present moment, militated against capital being sunk in wells. Of late years too, our cultivators have been so much taken up with the demand for cotton, a crop which can be produced sufficiently well without irrigation, that but little attention has been devoted to this improved mode of cultivation.

Facilities for irrigation.

98. Still all investigations and experiments tend to prove that great advantages would accrue to the district by an extension of irrigation. The subject has been under the consideration of Government, and an Engineer of the Irrigation Department has recently been employed in surveying some of the rich tracts of the Wurdah valley, with a view to preparing a project for a canal. Of the effect that the construction of such a canal would have, Mr. Bernard, when Settlement Officer, writes as follows:—

Advantages that would accrue to the district, by the extension of irrigation.

"Obviously the breadth sown with opium, huldee (turmeric), pân, (betel-leaf), and sugar-cane would very largely increase. By the last Trade Statistics, the Nagpore and Wurdah districts import for home consumption 60,000 maunds, or Rs. 7,00,000 worth of sugar annually. If a canal was to bring water to the fields of the people of Nagpore, there can be no doubt but that the area under sugar-cane would increase, until Nagpore produced at least enough sugar for its consumption. Indeed, considering the productive power of the soil, there seems to be no reason why Nagpore should not grow sugar enough for exportation by railway to the Western Coast, where the growth of sugar-cane is deficient. The sugar-cane of Nagpore grown in garden plots around villages is good of its kind, and a little attention and care would enable its sugar to rival the produce of the Nerbudda valley.

Mr. Bernard's opinion.

"Similarly with opium;—the poppy fields of the alluvial lands of Ashtee and Anjee (in the Wurdah valley) are to all appearances quite as good as those of Patna or Benares, perhaps not really inferior to those of Malwa. Already there is a rising export trade in opium from these districts to Hyderabad and the Berars.

"If the popy cultivation spread, there is no reason why opium should not be made up at Nagpore for the China market."

99. He then proceeds to show that the cotton plant more than any other requires irrigation, and that the acclimatization of the better sorts of cotton depends on the extension of facilities for irrigation. The probable results of watering wheat and oil seeds is thus described:—

"Nowhere in the Nagpore or Wurdah districts are grain or seed crops irrigated, so there are no data for judging what would be the result of watering wheat. But the soil of the Wurdah valley is probably much the same as that on the left bank of the Nerbudda. Both soils are, it is conjectured by some, mainly composed of detritus from the trap rocks of the Sautpoora range. Recently the results of some agricultural experiments made in Hoshungabad were published in the *Central Provinces Gazette*. These experiments showed that two waterings raised the produce of wheat and other grains from 492lbs., or about 8 bushels per acre, the average out-turn of the district, to 1,640 lbs., or 27 bushels per acre. Now the average yield of wheat in the Nagpore district is 400 lbs., or 6⅔ bushels per acre, It is computed that deep ploughing and superior culture would raise this out-turn to 9 bushels; and it is not unreasonable to presume that in ordinary years, two waterings would raise the out-turn to 13 bushels per acre.

"Seed crops want water even more than grain crops. At present very few castor-oil crops are raised in the Nagpore country, and although there is a considerable breadth (computed at 7 per cent. on the cultivated area, or about 130,000 acres) put down with linseed every year, the crops is considered a hazardous one, for its out-turn is not good, unless rain falls in October, or some heavy showers come in December. Still the crop, if at all a good one, pays so well that a considerable breadth is given to it every year. If seed corps could be irrigated, then the out-turn of linseed would be safer and larger. There are no data for estimating how much heavier a crop of linseed on irrigated land would be than an unirrigated crop, for linseed is not watered in these districts. Castor crops are occasionally watered, and then the out-turn is very good, but the yield of castor on unirrigated lands is very precarious.

"The seeds of the Nagpore district bear a high name in the market, and are largely exported; they are said to be better, and they fetch a higher price than the seeds of the Western Coast districts, so that, if facilities of irrigation were to make the seed crop a safe investment, the breadth put down with seeds could be indefinitely extended, and it might be expected that when the price of cotton in the home market sinks again to below 6*d.* a pound, seeds may take the place of cotton as the principal export of these districts.

"In ordinary years the Jowaree (Millet) crop would not want watering, the soil of these districts does not seem to be well adapted to the growth of maize, but it is possible that an ample supply of water would enable the black soil to produce this valuable grain. The foregoing remarks have noticed the probable effect of irrigation in years of average rain-fall. The benefits of irrigation in years of drought

would be incalculable. Colonel B. Smith's able report showed how irrigation had in the plains of the Ganges and Jumna almost taken the sting from drought. Droughts like those of Northern India are as yet unknown here. The rain-fall fluctuates, and some seasons are drier than others, but hitherto the forest-clad peaks of the Sautpoora range have always attracted a supply of rain for the plains which lie at their feet. But is it quite certain that this will be always so? The demand for timber and wood on railway roads and buildings of all kinds is very large already, and it will soon be larger. The forests in the Sautpooras are now being thinned, and within the next few years, very large drains will be made on their timber resources. If this range becomes comparatively bare, is there not considerable probability that the rain-fall on the plains at its base will become lighter? Against the disasters which agriculture would surely suffer if the rain-fall were materially to decrease, artificial irrigation would effectually provide.

"To sum up then the benefits to be expected from the provision of ample facilities for irrigation.

"A far larger area would be shown with pân, opium, huldee, garden stuffs and other valuable crops. The culture of sugar-cane and rice, instead of being confined to those secluded tracts, where the lie of the land allows of the formation of tanks and reservoirs, would spread over irrigated plains, where it would be carried on to much greater advantage. The better kinds of cotton could be acclimatized and the yield of indigenons cotton increased. Irrigation, if it could give water to grain crops, would raise the average out-turn from 6½ to 13 bushels an acre. Irrigation would make the seed crops, which are now precarious, a safe and remunerative investment, and it would cause the spread of castor and linseed crops, for the production of which the soil of Nagpore country is particularly adapted.

"It may be well here to give some answer to questions which are likely to arise, before any irrigation project is matured. Are the people likely to take water, if it were brought to their door? To what extent would they take it, and what could they pay for it? We, for our part, have no doubt about the readiness of the people to take as much water as can be brought to them. The more industrious caste of husbandmen, Mallees and Telees, would lead the way, and Koonbees would soon follow their example. We have frequently talked with intelligent land-owners about the canal irrigation of Northern India, and all whom we have asked seemed very anxious that the same facilities for irrigation should be afforded to their estates. The preceding paragraphs of this Note will show that all men who do irrigate will find irrigation pays them, provided the price of water be not too high.

"Lastly, as to the price the people of the Nagpore country could afford to pay for water. It has been said that sugar-growers in the best parts of the Wyngunga valley pay Rs. 1¼ per acre for water from adjoining tanks. But it should be added that the instances in which water-rent and land-rent are separate, are so few, that general inferences as to the rates of water-rent cannot safely be drawn from them.

"From the peculiar customs which have hitherto obtained in the Nagpore country, regarding the ownership of wells, it has often happened that there is in a field an irrigation well owned by neither the landlord nor tenant. The owner of the well may be some former tenant who, while he occupied the field, sank the well, and now, by the custom of the country, retains his interest in it. The tenant in occupation will in such cases often pay well-rent to the owner of the well. The rent thus paid ranges from Rs. 5 to Rs. 8 a well. Now, where no well waters as much as four acres, and where very few wells water as much as two acres, this payment represents a very high water-rent, inasmuch as all cost of working the well and distributing the water is borne by the occupant of the field. These high rents paid for wells situated in peculiarly favorable spots, though not rare, are not of such frequent occurrence as to warrant any general conclusions regarding the rent which water will fetch over considerable areas; small plots sown with garden stuffs or opium, as the irrigated plots of the Nagpore country for the most part are sown, could doubtless afford to pay 3 or 4 Rupees an acre as water-rent.

"To estimate the rent spring-crops could pay, it is necessary to ascertain the money value of the benefits that would result from watering wheat and other crops. Wheat crops now yielding an average out-turn of (say) eight-fold, pay the landlord an average rent of Rs. 1⅜. If irrigation doubled the out-turn without increasing the cost of cultivation by more than 5 per cent. for distribution channels, then the extra yield would be sheer gain, and the farmer could certainly afford to pay for water, as much as he used to pay for the use of the land when it returned only eight-fold, and when out of that return all the cost of cultivation, labor, &c., had to be met. The balance of the value of the extra out-turn would be divided between the landlord and the tenant.

"The following rough calculation will show what ought to be the money values of the benefits of irrigating a spring-crop.

"One acre takes 50 lbs of seed wheat; an acre yields 400 lbs—(at 40 lbs per Rupee) 10 Rupees; if irrigation doubles the out-turn, then the value of the benefits of irrigation is Rs. 10 an acre, of which perhaps half a rupee covers the cost of distribution channels. Certainly a farmer could afford to pay Rs. 1½ for water, which brought him a clear gain of Rs. 9½.

"The wholesale price of wheat in the Nagpore country has not fallen below 30 lbs the rupee for the last two years."

"It is true that in Northern India water has not, except on the Huslee Canal near Lahore, fetched on an average so high a rent, but then the tracts to which the great canals of the north pass have had a revision of settlement impending, whereas the revised assessments of the Nagpore country have 29 years more to run. We certainly are of opinion that the average lands of the Nagpore country could afford to pay a water-rent of Rs. 1½."

100. Of the benefits that would attend the extension of irrigation, of the impetus that agriculture would receive, of the increased profits to the cultivator more than in proportion to the expense and risk he

would undergo, no doubt can be entertained. But at present, with the large extent of land available for cultivation, procurable almost at nominal rates, with a soil so bountiful that but moderate care ensures to the cultivator sufficient to supply all his wants, any great extension of irrigation by private enterprise or sinking of capital in wells is not be looked for. It is to be hoped that the day is not far distant, when the Wurdah valley may boast of a Government canal. For the present, at least, the cultivator is not to be depended upon for any extension of irrigation. He is not as a rule a cultivator, he does not look beyond the present, and present prices give him enough and more than enough for his small wants. When the increase in the population shall have minutely sub-divided the land, and when the small plot remaining to the cultivator shall require some extra encouragement and labor to enable it to supply him and his family, then, and not till then, will the people be moved to dig wells and to take to irrigation on their own account. But bring water home to them, and carry a canal by their fields, and they will doubtless soon avail themselves of its benefits.

Extension of irrigation not to be looked for at present.

101. The system of cultivation of the unirrigated crops which of course represent the greater part of the produce of the district, is much the same as in other parts of India. The same rough and well known implements of husbandry are used. The chief crops are cotton, wheat, millet, jowaree (Holcus Sorghum), and the pulses. These are divided according to the seasons at which they are reaped, into two great crops; the "Khureef," which may be called the autumn crop, the "Rubbee," or spring crop.

Unirrigated Crops.

102. The work for the Khureef crops begins about May; the ground is then broken up to receive the first showers of the rainy season which fall about the first week in June. The sowing commences with the first break in the rains. The chief crops of the Khureef are jowaree (Holcus Sorghum), cotton, and a pulse called Thoor (Cytisus Cajan). The Khureef harvest is ready in November or December.

The Khureef Crops.

103. The Rubbee sowing does not commence until after the rainy season, about November, when the jowaree is ripening and the women are busy in the field picking the cotton. In Wurdah the chief crop of the Rubbee is wheat. There is also a cotton crop sown about this time called the "jerrie" as distinguished from the bunnee or autumn crop. At this season too are sown chunna or gram (Cicer Arictimun), moong (Phaselus Mungo), and oil seeds of sorts, ulsee or linseed (Jawas), til or sesame, and erindee or the castor oil plant. These crops ripen in February. They vary very much according to the season, and are very dependent on the rain, which is generally expected about Christmas, any failure of the supply causing much damage and distress.

The Rubbee Crops.

104. Jowaree (millet) is one of the most important crops of the district. The settlement returns show that 260,209 acres or 39 per cent. of the cultivated area of the district are taken up with it. The area was perhaps greater formerly, and jowaree has doubtless made way of late years to some extent for cotton. It is raised on all classes of soil, and is cultivated in all parts of the district for home consumption and for export. It is a hardy plant, but its perfection depends much on the field allotted to it, the plant in the landholder's field near the village homestead being so high as to conceal a man on horseback, perhaps even an elephant, whilst the ryots' patch of jowaree on some outlying stony ridge will hardly afford cover to a jackall. It is a very popular crop in the country, the head or fruit supplying the food in general use among the people, the stalk furnishing the "Kurbee" or fodder on which the cattle depend for the greater part of year. The head of the jowaree is very good eating, even raw, and the people who work at the jowaree harvest, in addition to the payment in cash, receive so many heads of jowaree for their mid-day meal. It is the favourite food of the Mahrattas, and in its raw state was much in fashion in the army, with the wild horsemen, who always in the saddle, had not much time to think of careful cooking, and the picture drawn by one of the Nawab's Ministers of the ever-ready Sivajee taking his lunch in the saddle, gnawing the "bhootta," or uncooked fruit of the jowaree that struck fear into the heart of the Nawab of the Deccan.

Jowaree.

105. Cotton is so important a crop, and the trade connected with it has so much affected the district, that something more than a passing notice of it is called for, and the subject will be found treated of at some length in an Appendix to this Report. But in order to compare it with the other produce of the district it may be mentioned here, that according to the latest returns the area under cotton cultivation is 184,110 acres or 27½ per cent. on the cultivated area of the district. Of this the greater part belongs to the Khurcef or Autumn crop. It is now cultivated almost exclusively for export.

Cotton yield.

106. Thoor (Cytisus Cajan) is a pulse of the Khureef crops, and is generally planted in alternate rows with cotton. It is used much by the lower classes of the people as food. The area occupied by this and other pulses amounts to 33,633 acres. It is grown in small quantities in all parts of the district, but seldom monopolizes good ground.

Thoor (Cytisus Cajan) and other pulses.

107. Of the spring or Rubbee harvest, the most important crop is wheat. It is considered to be one of the most paying of crops, and notwithstanding the high price of cotton has held in its own well, the area occupied by it amounting to 158,450 acres, or 23 per cent. of the cultivated area.

The spring harvest.

Wheat.

The great wheat granary of the district is in the old Mandgaon Talooqua, through which the traveller passes on his journey from Nagpore to Hingunghat,

Wheat is also extensively grown in the rich villages lying along the Wurdah, and in the Baila Pergunnah of the Nagpore District. The very richest and best fields are apportioned to its cultivation, the black cotton soil being generally believed to be better adapted to wheat than to cotton. Cotton, too, will thrive just as well in a rather inferior class of soil, but this wheat will not do. Wheat generally ripens about February, and the grain is then trodden out by the bullocks in the usual manner. It is largely consumed in the district, but a large residue is left for exportation, as the trade statistics will show.

Oil Seeds.

108. The Wurdah oil seeds have a high character in the market. The district grows 64,678 acres of linseed and 3,141 acres of castor oil seeds. Thus 10 per cent. of the cultivated area of the district is taken up with this class of produce. Oil being much required for many purposes of domestic consumption, oil seeds are pretty generally cultivated throughout the district. Linseed is generally sown in first class soil, but the crop is a hazardous one, for its development depends on the cold weather showers of November and December, which are often capricious, and the absence of which are often so fatal to the spring harvest. Castor oil is grown in a small patch in a corner of one of his fields by nearly every cultivator. He uses it for the lamp he burns at home and for greasing the axles of the wheels of his cart, and private "ringhee," or bullock-drawn chariot. Sometimes, too, either his cattle or his children require a dose of this great panacea, so that the cultivation is pretty general, though limited in extent. No where, save in the villages bordering on the jungle, does it assume the character of a crop. There it is sown where any less undelectable crop would not last long under the repeated attacks of the hungry deer and other wild animals. But castor oil has the same well known disagreeable effects upon wild animals as upon mankind, and being equally unpalatable to the one as to the other, escapes the ravages of wild animals.

Gram.

109. Gram (Cicer Arietinum) is not a favorite crop; 6,342 acres are devoted to this class of cultivation, which falls very nearly at the rate of 1 per cent. to the cultivated area.

CHAPTER V.

POPULATION, LANGUAGES, CASTES.

Population.

110. The Settlement operations have included a house census, which, although not perfectly accurate, is sufficiently correct to convey a very fair idea of the population of the country, and the classes of which it is composed. The Settlement Ameen, or measurer, when he had completed a measurement of the fields, mapped out also the village site, each house being separately shown and numbered on his plan. Thus the enumeration of the houses may be supposed to be sufficiently correct. Then an average number of souls per house was assumed, such average being based on experience. Hence the aggregate of the population was deduced and a detailed statement showing the number of inhabitants in each village, their sex, caste, and occupation, and other statistics, was submitted to assist the Settlement Officer in forming an opinion regarding the resources of the place. From these papers the present figures have been compiled. They show the population of the Wurdah district to be 214,751, or 133 souls to the square mile, and the aggregate number of houses to be 82,520, or three souls per house. Of these the agricultural class number 84,508, standing to the non-agriculturists in the proportion of two to three. These figures give 12 cultivators to 100 acres of cultivation. The population is almost entirely Hindoo.

House census made.

Number of souls to the square mile and per house.

Their language.

111. The language prevalent throughout the district (though in certain parts being mixed up with Ghondee and Gaolee, it degenerates into a Patois) is Mahratti. Formerly although indisputably the vernacular of the district, Mahratti was not the language of the Courts. Presided over as they were by Officers drawn from the Bengal Presidency and the north of India, to whom the language was little known, and who were again assisted by the Kayeth or Mahomedan subordinates brought with them from Hindoostan, the Oordu language became universally adopted in our Courts. Oordu being the language which all natives who were in any way brought into connection with the European governing power had to be conversant with, it is spoken by all educated Natives in the district, and is more or less understood too by the lower classes, whose language, however, is essentially Mahratti. Mahratti, as will be explained further on, is now the language of our Courts, and the language in which the Settlement records have been prepared.

The Mahratti language the vernacular of the district.

112. Situated as the Nagpore and Wurdah country is, on the very borders of Maharashtra, bounded on the north by the Hindoo speaking people of the old Saugor and Nerbudda territories, to the south and east almost mixed up with the Telingas of the Godavery, and containing a considerable population, who still speak a dialect of Gondee and Gaolee, it is not to be expected that the Mahratti of these parts, where the streams of so many languages mingle, should be of the purest description. I learn from a Memorandum written by a Brahmin gentleman educated at Poonah, now employed in these provinces, that the language spoken at Nagpore differs considerably from the Mahratti of the Bombay Presidency. He mentions, however, that the difference is not much greater than that which is found to exist in dialects of Mahratti, spoken in various parts of the Bombay Presidency, and he accounts for the difference between Bombay and Nagpore Mahratti by the fact that whereas the Mahratti of Bombay contains much Sanskrit, the Nagpore Mahratti is saturated with antique Prakrit words. The Nagpore language is said to resemble very closely that spoken by the Koonbees of the Bombay Presidency. Brahmins who come up from Bombay, and who have had much intercourse with the country people in that Presidency, do not, after a short time, find any difficulty in conversing freely with the lower classes here, and they have no difficulty whatever in getting on with the higher classes, whose language closely resembles their own. In fact there is perhaps much less difference between the Mahratti of Bombay and Nagpore, than there is between the French spoken at Strasburg and at Paris.

Difference between the Bombay and Nagpore Mahratti.

113. Of the Gond language very little is known. It has no written character. A Gond's knowledge and experience of things must be so limited that the language cannot be very rich. It is perhaps just about enough to express his few wild wants. When a Gond leaves the jungle and commences to imbibe ideas, he begins to learn Mahratti. Most travelled Gonds talk a patois of the two languages. In some parts too the remnants of a Gaolee dialect is extant, but by constant interchange a debased coin, composed of a fusion of all three languages, has got into currency, and is used as the medium of exchanging ideas among the people of the three races dwelling near one another in the hill tracts.

Gondee and Gaolee languages.

114. From a Statement furnished by Captain Gordon many years ago, the number of castes among the Hindoo population of Nagpore is shown to be as many as 114, exercising 62 separate professions. By including Mussulmans and outcastes, the number of separate castes is swelled to 119, with 68 different professions. The greater number of these castes, Sir R. Jenkins says, came originally from Berar and the Deccan, 53 being from Berar, 23 from Hindoostan, 12 from Telingana, 19 itenerant; three castes, the Brahmins, Bidoors, and Mahomedans being from all parts of India indiscriminately The Mahomedans do not, of course, belong to any "caste," but forming a distinct section, they are included in this enumeration, which has reference more to classes than castes. It will not be possible to follow all these castes with their differences and minute details, and a brief notice of the principal castes and professions existing in the Wurdah district will perhaps suffice here.

Hindoo Castes.

115. The Brahmins, though here as every where else, very powerful, are not a very numerous caste in Wurdah. The Deshpandias are always Brahmins, and amongst their number some of the most influential landholders are included. The Brahmins connected with the religious services of the district are pretty numerous, many of them enjoying plots of rent-free ground. Every village or circle of villages has its Jotshee or Parish Priest, who is indispensable on many domestic occasions. The Pandias, or village accountant class, are exclusively Brahmins; and their superior education secures employment for Brahmins wherever some knowledge of writing and account-keeping is required. Times are so hard, at least this is the excuse given, that the Brahmins, utterly disregarding the instructions of the Vedas, now engage in trade, and are to be seen doing business on a large scale at all the marts in the district, or keeping small shops in out-of-the-way villages. They hold a great many fields of the district too as cultivators; but they seldom drive the plough themselves, and are not worth much as agriculturists. Most of the Brahmin families trace their origin to the west, which they still call their "Desh" or "Home;" and they visit Bombay and Poonah occasionally on pilgrimages. Many doubtless emigrated here long before the arrival of Mudhojee and his army. The illiterate Gonds required educated assistance, and in Bukt Boolund's time, and perhaps before that even, the language of the Gond Government was Mahratti, the correspondence being carried on by Brahmins. The Brahmins of these parts consider themselves to be more orthodox than their brethren who are now imported from Poonah, and a new arrival is looked upon with some suspicion and distrust, and has to pass through some sort of probation before he is admitted here to all the privileges of the caste. This circumstance has often proved specially embarrassing to newly appointed Brahmin Officials in the Educational Department.

Brahmin.

116. Of the cultivating classes by far the most numerous are the Koonbees. The greater part of these were established in the Wurdah valley before the Mahratta conquest. They are divided, according to Sir R. Jenkins, into two classes, the "Jharee Koonbees" or Koonbees of the jungles, and the Mahratta Koonbees. The "Jharees" are supposed to have come from the Western Coast at a very early period, and to have been among the earliest of the settlers in this part of the country. Their language is Mahratti. They are steady and hard-working, the most persevering perhaps of all the cultivating class, and they form the bulk of the agricultural population. According to all accounts it was by them that the villages of the Wurdah valley were first reclaimed from the jungle. Many of the villages have undoubtedly been in the possession of the Koonbee families for very long periods, as will be seen by the success with which the Koonbees have fought many claims to proprietary right. It was from this class that the Deshmookh, already mentioned, was generally chosen, and although the Brahmin Deshpandiah associated with the Deshmookh, he held originally an inferior position to him; the Deshpandiah often enough succeeded in ousting the landholder, his client, in the same manner that the attorney sometimes did

The Koonbees.

The Jharee Koonbees.

in England. The Koonbees have, however, held their own very well, as the list of estates held by this class will testify. The Koonbees are the best of farm servants and are much in request. The other most prominent division of the Koonbee is the Mahratta Koonbee. They are, Sir R. Jenkins says, supposed to be descendants of Mahratta horsemen and others, who accompanied the first Rughojee from Berar. They come from the same stock as the Jharee Koonbees, but having left their country much later, have taken some time to amalgamate with the old settlers, and hence the slight distinction that exists between them.

The Mahratta Koonbees.

117. Another and very important cultivating class are the Malees. What well irrigation there is, is carried on chiefly by them. To them belong the garden-plots in Anjee and in Nachengaon. One sect of their caste called "Baries" are the owners of the Betel gardens, but not only as gardeners do they excel, they are also good farmers. They are perhaps less robust and less persevering than the Koonbees, and one or two bad harvests will dishearten a Malee, when the only effect on a Koonbee would be to make him work doubly hard to make up for lost ground. But they are popular tenants, and a landholder will not often refuse a field to a Malee.

The Malees and Baries.

118. The Telees, though named after the plant which they cultivate, do not confine themselves to the cultivation of oil seeds. They, too, are good and popular tenants. Many Telee cultivators crush out the oil from the seed in their private oil mills, but many are purely agriculturists.

The Telees.

119. The Mahrattas, properly so called, scarcely require a place in this part of the Report. The divisions of the caste have been mentioned in referring to the history of the country. They form a very insignificant part of the agricultural population. Reductions of late years in the Native Contingent have induced many old soldiers to resort to agriculture, and they seem to take to the change very kindly and promise to succeed well.

The Mahrattas.

120. The Gonds do not do much as cultivators; the instance of a Gond attaining to any pitch of agricultural prosperity is almost unknown. His wild untamed nature would perhaps make him feel uncomfortable in the position of a landholder. But they are faithful and devoted servants, cheerful and hard-working, and are popular with their masters. Some Gonds are, as a matter of grace, allowed to rank among the lower classes of Hindoos, some again, as already explained, are Mahomedans, as, for instance, Rajah Soliman Shah, the present head of the Gond family in Nagpore.

The Gonds.

121. The Gaolees or herdsmen seldom cultivate. They are migratory in their habits, and their attention is almost entirely devoted to their herds and flocks. In some parts of the district, however, Gaolee tenants are to be met with. Those now in the province are supposed to be the remnant of other tribes, the first pioneers in these parts, who visited the valley of the Wurdah when its only tenants were the jungle, the wild animals, and the hardly less wild Gonds. They all

The Gaolees.

claim a high descent and pretend to trace their pedigree through petty Rajahs to some one or other of the gods.

Coolies and other low castes.

122. The remaining castes having but little agricultural connection with the Wurdah district, require but a very slight notice. There are many divisions of low caste people of sorts, common laborers, Dhers and Mahars, from whom the village kutwal or watchman is recruited, the Dhungers, who rear sheep and work the wool into coarse blankets, basket-makers, and many others. On their services the landholders depend much at harvest time. Their number is hardly sufficient for the wants of the district, and, as I have explained in my Chapter on cotton, the absence of a larger laboring agency of this description is one of the disadvantages under which the extension of cotton cultivation labors. It is hoped that the introduction of machinery, which will increase our working power, may remedy this.

The Mahomedans.

123. The Mahomedans are not numerous, they are the remnants of what were once powerful Jageerdars and their tenants. They are most numerous on the banks of the Wurdah within the limits of the district, that was held until the treaty of 1817 by the Nizam. The names of some of the villages, such as Russoolabad, Aleepoor, which are also full of Mahomedan buildings, show that they owe their origin to Mahomedan founders. Aleepoor was long held by the family of the Nawab of Ellichpoor, who rendered good service to the Duke of Wellington, then Major General the Honorable A. Wellesley, during the operations that immediately succeeded Assaye, and the tombs and forts built by members of the family are still to be seen there. But more than 40 years ago the Mahratta Government turned the Nawab out (for having aided our cause he says) and gave this fine village to the Chitnavees, the Secretary in the Revenue Department, who has held it ever since. The Nawab's representative tried hard to gain proprietary right of the village, founding his claim on the devotion of his ancestor to the British Government, and his undoubted ancestral right. But the present holder had been too long in possession, upwards of 40 years, and the case went against the Mahomedan claimant.

Resident landlords.

124. The importance of making landlords live on their estates, or keep a competent agent to perform the many important duties which the postion of landholders entails, has been recognized by Government, and proprietory right is now conferred conditionally, subject to the landholder engaging either to live on his estate, or keep an approved agent there to undertake his responsibilities. On the presence in the village, and on the constant attention of the landlord to his property, the prosperity of the estate very much depends. To work a village well, an intimate knowledge of all details is required, and this cannot well be acquired by an absentee. Villages that have the benefit of a resident landlord are invariably found to be the best. Where the landlord is an absentee, the village, having lost its head, and the tenants having no one to keep them together, seldom prospers.

CHAPTER VI.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Communications.

The line of railroad.

125. Under this heading the chief feature in the Wurdah district, is the line of Railroad, forming part of the Nagpore extension of the G. I. P. Railway, which traverses the whole breadth of the district from east to west, entering it near Kowtah, where the great viaduct forming the western gate of the Central Provinces spans the Wurdah, and leaving the district near to the Railway Station of Boree, 18 miles from the Terminus at Nagpore. The length of the line from the Wurdah river to Boree is 40 miles. Railway Stations are situated at convenient distances. The first is at Poolgaon, near the site of the old Civil Station of the district. It is the frontier town of the provinces, and situated near the large village of Nachengaon, and at the point where the cotton road, leading from the marts of Arvee and Deolee, strikes the Railway, promises to be a place of some importance. Here also is situated the Head Office of the Wurdah Circle of the Customs Departments, where the salt, coming from Bombay, crosses the long cordon of the Preventive Establishment, by which these provinces are encircled. Leaving Kowtah, the Railway following the line of the water shed, passes for a short distance over a bleak uninteresting stripe, until the station of Wurdah, the district head quarters, is reached. But the traveller must not judge of the Wurdah district by the unprofitable-looking tract through which he has just passed. It is but a narrow strip, raised and well adapted for a Railway line, but not possessing equal advantages for cultivation. It borders on some of the richest lands of the district. Just beyond the sterile hill where the bleak-looking cluster of houses, formerly the public Offices of the Civil Station of Kowtah, stand out prominently, are the rich lands of the Anjee pergunnah, the cotton produce of which has made the name of its chief town Arvee famous as a cotton mart. On either side of the line, too, though generally hidden from view, are the thriving villages of the Nachengaon Pergunnah, with their carefully tended garden plots, where more irrigated produce is raised than in any other part of the district. As the Wurdah Station is approached, the country gradually rises, offshoots of the Sautpooras appearing on the right and left of the line. The appearance of the country immediately around Wurdah is bare and not particularly prepossessing, but the site of the new station has the advantages of being central and healthy, convenient to the people of the district, and to the civil staff. The villages in the neighbourhood are rich, and beyond the ridge, along which the line passes, is Pownar with its ruins, and aged trees which mark its former grandeur, the thriving village of Burburree, and other highly cultivated estates. The distance from Kowtah to Wurdah is 18½ miles. Sindee, the station next beyond Wurdah, is 19¾ miles east. Between Wurdah

and Sindee the line crosses the Rivers Dam and Bore, fed by the torrents which pour down from the hills lying to the left of the traveller. Sindee is situated in the centre of a highly cultivated country, and is 12 miles from Boree. The Boree station is situated just on the Nagpore side of the Wunna River, which forms the north-east boundary of my charge.

Railway extension.

126. At the time I am now writing, the Railway, as regards the Wurdah district, is an accomplished fact. The line is open to traffic as far as Kowtah, and the landholders of Wurdah can travel with ease from their homes to within 24 miles of Punderpore, most sacred to all Mahrattas, a journey of six weeks in olden times, which few had the health or means to undertake. The fine cotton of Deolee and Hingunghat will now be spared the deterioratoin by dirt and exposure which the toilsome journey over unmade roads used to entail, and which detracted so much from the character and value of the produce. The line is now finished far past Kowtah; the contractor's engine runs to within 6 miles of Boree.

Prospective advantage from the opening of the Railway to Nagpore.

127. It is almost impossible to over-estimate the benefits that will accrue to the districts of Nagpore and Wurdah by the opening of the Railway. The line is indeed to them the spinal cord terminating at the head Nagpore, and is the backbone of the whole system of district communications. On the Railway will depend the growth and vigour of this tract of country, which, in consequence of the unhealthy state of the communication with the great artaries of trade, has so long been lying paralysed and stunted. The completion of the line of communication has already galvanized and poured new life into the body of the district. Of its exact effect upon the landholders and land revenue of the district, it will be for the Officer who makes the next Settlement to describe; but of the stimulus it will give to commerce, and of the improvement of the condition of landholder and cultivator thereby, no doubt can exist.

Cotton roads.

128. On this great backbone the road system of the district chiefly depends. The cotton roads, the great arteries of trade which connect the Railway with the heart of the cotton-growing country, strike the line at the Kowtah station; and country tracts, passable enough in the fair weather, lead into Wurdah and Sindee. In the south of the district the cotton road commences from the market at Hingunghat, which again is connected with Chandah and the country lying to the south, by the imperial road to be noticed in para. 127. This road then will not only pour the cotton of the Wurdah district into the Kowtah station, but will also be the route along which the surplus produce of Chandah and the districts lying to the east and south will find their way to the Railway. On its way to the Railway, this line is carried through the town of Deolee, a cotton mart hardly inferior to Hingunghat in importance, situated 10 miles south of Kowtah. Produced across the Railway line, this road runs up the narrow and highly cultivated strip of country, lying between the hills and the Wurdah, and connects Arvee,

the third and last cotton market of the district, with the Railway. It passes through the very richets part of the Wurdah valley by the side of broad fertile fields sown with cotton, and in the export season this road thronged with carts and camels, and every sort of conveyance pressed in to carry the cotton to market, presents a very busy scene. The importance of this road which connects the villages that grow, and the towns that collect the cotton, with the Railroad which carries the produce away for exportation, will be easily understood.

The Southern Road.

129. Two other important roads traverse the district. The southern road, which passes through from north to south, entering the district at Boree, and leaving it in its southern corner 20 miles below Hingunghat, connects Nagpore with Chandah, and forms the line of communication between Central India and Hyderabad. It is furnished with Staging Bungalows at intervals of every 20 miles, for the convenience of travellers. As a Military, and Political line it ranks in the first class. To the Wurdah district it is important as running through the rich country of Baila, Mandgaon, and Hingunghat, and connecting these tracts with the Railway and the markets. The road is carried some distance to the east of Hingunghat; but a cross line of 8 miles in length connects the main road with the market. It is yet to be seen whether, when the Railway opens, this or the cotton road above mentioned will be the great channel between Hingunghat and the Railway. If this road be chiefly resorted to, then the importance of Sindee will considerably increase. The southern road is also of considerable interest to the district, inasmuch as it connects Nagpore and the Wurdah country with the Godavery, or more properly the Wurdah Navigation Scheme, which some day may be a great outlet for our cotton. The present project is, however, to extend the navigation up to Hingunghat; if this be done, then the value of this road as a cotton line will be considerably affected.

The old Bombay Road.

130. At Boree, the southern road is met by a line which, until the appearance of the Railway, was the route taken by all travellers on their journey between Nagpore and Bombay. It runs nearly parallel with the line of Railway, and is furnished with Dâk Bungalows and other conveniences. The richness of the country through which it passed was fatal to its character as a road. Whatever merits black cotton soil may possess for purposes of cultivation, it is impossible to deny that it is hardly so well adapted for roads, and this all travellers who in days gone by have made the weary journey along this line, have learnt to their cost. But the days of the old Bombay road are now numbered.

Tracks between villages.

131. In addition to these roads, each village is connected with its neighbour by a cart track, which being somewhat peculiar, deserves a few words of description. These tracks generally consist of two parallel ruts, situated at about 3 feet apart, varying in depth from a few inches to 2 feet. It is by means of these ruts that the whole internal commerce of the district is conducted. It may at first appear incredible that any cart laden with cotton can live on such a "road." But in reality they are not very badly adapted to trade, as it now stands. The ruts,

the one being always parallel to the other, and of exactly the same depth, act indeed as a sort of tramway. The carts are all made of the same "gauge," and the bullocks are so harnessed, that they trot comfortably along in the ruts—the sharp narrow wheels of the cart running smoothly along and cutting like a knife through any inequality that may present itself. By the help of these ruts the carts travel along easily enough. It is when sets of carts going in opposite directions meet, that mischief is done—one set of carts must leave the line of tramway, and one or two break-downs are inevitable. In many tracks, however, a right and left tramway are established, and the rule of the road is strictly observed. As there is hardly ever any traffic, save in the fine weather, this style of country road suits carts well enough. Along the tramways "ringhies" or light chariots drawn by fast trotting bullocks, carry landholders along at a famous pace; for your Wurdah landholders never ride, the ringhee or bullock chariot being the means of locomotion universally adopted by them. And in fact in some parts where the cart tracks are deep, and the cotton soil full of holes, the ringhee is adopted even by European Officers. Riding is almost impracticable, for the distance between the ruts is not sufficiently broad to admit of a horse moving at any pace, and the ruts themselves are dangerous for any horse that puts his foot into them. On the metalled roads the effects of these ringhees and carts with their sharp wheels are most disastrous; ruts cut deep through the metal, and exposing the ballast below, mark their progress. But it is to be hoped that a new system of roads will give birth to a new style of carts. The old ringhee and cart wheel were but the necessary consequence of an utter absence of metalled roads, and it is to be hoped that good roads will be followed by carts with broad wheels, which indeed are already beginning to make their appearance. For the present, until the system of roads connecting the villages is improved, the carts and the cart-tracks suit one another well enough. No traffic takes place save in the fine seasons, for during the rains, even if any produce remained to be exported, the cattle could not well be spared during those months, the busiest of the year to the agriculturalists. The carts manage to get along the hard dry road quite easily, but a shower of rain, or a nullah swollen by a fine weather shower, is a most serious obstacle, resulting in much delay, and many broken axles. These axles, however, are easily replaced, being of wood they wear themselves out by degrees, and when one snaps another is fitted in, each cart-driver carrying several axles, hung like spare anchors at the bow of his cart, ready for any emergency. In fact the length or difficulty of a journey is often described by the number of axles expended, and I have heard it remarked, that before the arrival of the Railway, Poonah was reckoned to be a journey of 1,000 axles!

Navigation by the Wurdah river.

132. If the river could be rendered navigable, the best and cheapest means of communication between the Wurdah district and the coast would be through the great natural outlet offered by the river Wurdah. Parts of the route are practicable at certain seasons, and it is related in Sir Richard Jenkins' Report that boats from a village near Hinghunghat have found their way to the sea. I myself have made the

journey from Chanda to the Coast, journeying over-land through the country adjoining the Barriers. But in many parts the navigation is as yet intricate and dangerous, and can only be undertaken at great risk. It is to remove the difficulties that now beset the navigation, and to furnish an unbroken system of water-communication between the rich districts of the Nagpore province and the sea, that the well-known "Godavery Navigation Scheme" was projected and commenced. The chief object of the scheme is in reality the navigation of the *Wurdah* river, and the opening up of the country through which it flows. The Godavery proper, by which I mean the Godavery before its junction with the Wurdah, has nothing to do with the project. Not far below Chandah the Wurdah loses its name at a point where it joins a river inferior to it in importance—the Wyngunga. Here a sort of compromise is come to, the Wurdah does not give way, to the Wyngunga, but their united streams take the name of the Pranheeta, by which they are known for a short distance of 125 miles, until they merge into the Godavery, at the junction near Sironcha. The course of the Godavery from its source near Nassick to the junction is, it is true, longer than that of the Wurdah, but the Godavery being unfit for navigation, and passing through a comparatively poor country, is inferior both in consideration and calibre to the Wurdah, which is the more deserving of bearing the name, by which the united streams are to be known from their junction to the sea. But this river has long been known as the Godavery, and thus although the navigation project was chiefly undertaken in order to afford an outlet to the products of the Wurdah country and its neighbourhood, and although an important part of the project has reference to the navigation of the Wurdah river alone, still the undertaking goes by the not very appropriate name of the "Godavery Navigation Scheme."

The obstacles to navigation.

133. The chief obstacles to the navigation are chains of rocks which cross the river at several points in its course, and are known as the barriers of the Godavery. They are generally come upon where the hills close in upon the river, and are indeed the rocky strata, the roots of the hills, laid bare by the action of the water on the soil which covered them. The barriers are three in number. The first, the nearest to the sea, is situated at 142 miles from the port of Coconada. It is but 8 miles in length, being the least formidable obstacle of the three. The volume of water is large in the rains, and small steamers ply safely over what at other times is a tangled mass of rock and jungle, through which the narrow stream threads its way with difficulty. From the sea to the foot or southern extremity of the first barrier, a distance of 142 miles, the river is navigable during certain seasons of the year. This length is called the 1st reach of the Godavery. At the head of the 1st Barrier is situated Doomagoodium, the Head Quarters of the Godavery Engineer's Staff. From this point commences the 2nd reach of the river, which extends to the foot of the 2nd Barrier, a distance of 70 miles. The length of river between these two points is navigable during certain seasons of the year. For some distance above the Barrier there is always a deep pool of water, and the ranges of rock although obstructing

the navigation of that part of the river where they appear, act also as a natural anicut, throwing back the stream, and ensuring a deep channel for a distance of some miles. The 2nd Barrier is 14 miles in length, and presents itself close to the junction of the Godavery and Indrawuttee, a river which rises near Jugdulpoor, the Capital of Bustar. Beyond the head of the 2nd Barrier, the Godavery receives the waters of the Wyngunga and Wurdah rivers, here called the Pranheeta, and from this point, the Godavery, a shallow unprofitable river with a wide sandy bed, offering no facilities for navigation, is lost sight of. The Godavery is now left and Pranheeta followed, and passing Seroncha, the Head Quarters of the Godavery district, we come to the 3rd Moglee at the foot of the 3rd Barrier. This, the most formidable Barrier on the river, extends for 36 miles, and it is here that the Wyngunga and Wurdah unite. By means of the Wyngunga some sort of communication can be effected by water during the rains between the Pranheeta and Kamptee, the Military station of Nagpore, situated on the Kunhan. The bed of this river also is full of rocks, but is navigable for small boats during part of the year. It is to be hoped that the navigation of this river, which is important, may some day be improved, and that the very rich country lying along its banks may be opened out.

The Wurdah river.

134. From the head of the 3rd Barrier we come upon the Wurdah river proper, and are in what is called the 3rd reach of the Godavery. Hingunghat is reached after a journey of about 100 miles from this point, during which the traveller passes the rich lands of the Chanda district, lying along the north bank of the river. The City of Chanda is situated in the centre of this tract at a distance of about 10 miles from the river. To reach Hingunghat the Wurdah must be left, and Wunna, one of the its affluents, followed for a distance of a few miles.

The Godavery navigation scheme.

135. To remove these obstacles which bar the passage between Hingunghat and the sea, the grand "Godavery Navigation Scheme" has been proposed and partly carried out. The details of that great scheme have been described in the published Reports, and it is not necessary to do more here than to mention that it is proposed to avoid these obstacles by means of canals, which will be carried round the Barriers. The bed of the river will also be improved in many places, and navigation rendered more easy and safe. If this scheme be ever accomplished, of which there appears to be every hope, then the cotton and produce of the Wurdah district will be carried to port at that cheap rate which water carriage alone can afford.

CHAPTER VII.

WURDAH DISTRICT—DIVISIONS AND BOUNDARIES.

Administrative divisions and re-arrangement of district boundaries.

136. Up to the end of 1861-62, what is now the Wurdah district was a dependency of the district of Nagpore. The charge was generally given to some Senior Assistant, whose position towards the Deputy Commissioner of the district very much resembled that in which the Assistant in charge of a sub-division stood towards the Magistrate and Collector in Bengal.

The Wurdah Sub-division raised to the rank of a district.

In 1862 it was desided to raise the Wurdah Sub-division to the rank of a district (zillah), and to appoint a Deputy Commissioner to the charge. At that date the Wurdah Sub-division consisted of the tract mentioned in a previous Chapter, the position and boundaries of which have already been described.

Its pergunnahs.

137. This tract comprised what under the Mahratta rule had been seven distinct sub-divisions, called pergunnahs, each of which in former days was presided over by a native official, called a Kumash-dar, and having its separate staff of Deshmookhs, Deshpandias, and other Revenue officials. Under our Government new arrangements have been made for administrative purposes, and these old sub-divisions are now obsolete. They are no longer recognized; they had originally no natural exsistence and no traditional or historical association; they were arbitrary divisions formed by the Mahrattas for practical purposes at no very old date, and indeed are of no use whatsoever save to distinguish between villages bearing the same name, which are common enough in so large a division as a tehseel, though not often met with in a pergunnah. Still for very many reasons it has been found necessary, during Settlement operations, to recognize, and work according to, the pergunnah boundaries. For Settlement purposes the pergunnah divisions were more convenient than the extensive tract comprised within a tehseel of sub-collectorate. Moreover the pergunnah divisions were familiar to the people, and the information on which the Settlement Officer had often to a considerable extent to depend, was as a rule only to be obtained, so to speak, "pergunnahwar," that is, according to pergunnahs. Old pergunnah officials and others, although thoroughly aquainted with every village in their own pergunnah, were often utterly ignorant of places just beyond its limits. As then the pergunnahs into which the district was once divided will have to be referred to in subsequent Chapters of this Report, some notice of these now obsolete boundaries appears to be called for here.

Their abolition under new arrangements.

Their recognition necessary during Settlement operations.

138. Commencing from the north, the first pergunnah entered is Anjee. It has a considerable river frontage, and the narrow but rich valley strip hemmed in between the river and the hills, which extends as already mentioned, from the point at which the Wurdah enters the district, to where the hills branch off at Berool, forms the western and most valuable portion of the Anjee pergunnah. The lands in the east of Anjee are much cut up by the off-shoots of the Sautpoorahs, the northern rampart of the district. Below Anjee, lying along the left bank of the Wurdah, and possessing also a considerable river frontage, is the Nachengaon pergunnah. To the south of Nachengaon, resembling it much in shape and position, lies Undooree with its broad river lands. Beyond this again is Pohona, the most southern pergunnah of the district. These four pergunnahs, lying along the banks of the Wurdah, may be called the river-pergunnahs of the district. Leaving the Wurdah and travelling in-land, the most northern of the Central Pergunnahs of the district is Pownar. This long narrow strip lies south of Anjee, and flanks Nachengaon and Undooree on the east. To the south and east of Pownar is situated the large and important pergunnah of Hingunghat, which borders on the Chandah district, and adjoins the last and most eastern pergunnah of the district, that of Baila, which extends to within 15 miles of the city of Nagpore. These seven pergunnahs represent the limits of the old sub-division of Kowtah, as it stood when the sub-division was raised to the rank of a district, and the name changed from Kowtah to the more appropriate one of Wurdah. It is to these seven pergunnahs, too, that the operations of the Wurdah Settlement Department have been confined, and it is this tract which is referred to when the Wurdah district is spoken of.

Position of the pergunnahs.

139. Some short time after the Wurdah district had been constituted an independent charge, and a separate Settlement establishment told off to it, a re-division of the territory between Nagpore and Wurdah was decided on for administrative reasons relating to the convenience of both the Government and the people. The re-arrangement of the boundary was carried into effect in 1863-64, and since that date the administrative business of the two districts has been carried on according to the new boundaries. But the plan on which the settlements of Nagpore and Wurdah had been started, and had for some time worked, underwent no alteration. Such a change would have caused very great inconvenience and would have considerably delayed the operations of both Settlements, and it was accordingly decided that the work should be completed, as commenced, according to the old boundaries of the two districts. Thus, then, the district which I have to describe does not represent the Wurdah district as it now stands, nor do the statistics given in this Report show the circumstances and resources of the new Wurdah district. These statistics represent but a portion of the Wurdah district; the remaining details must be prepared by the

Re-arrangement of the boundary between Nagpore and Wurdah.

Settlement operations continued according to the old boundaries.

Nagpore Settlement Officer, whose operations extend over a very considerable portion of the Wurdah territory. In the same manner the operations of my department have included one pergunnah of the present district of Nagpore, the settlements of the two districts being in fact dovetailed the one into the other, and it being impossible to submit complete satistics of either district until both settlements shall have been finished.

Exchange of territory.

140. The accompanying sketch map will help to explain the territorial exchanges between the two districts. It will be seen that by the exchange the Wurdah district gained the whole of pergunnah Ashtee and part of pergunnahs Khandalee and Kelzur, which formerly belonged to Nagpore. In the south-east, too, Nagpore relinquished a large portion of pergunnah Girur. The only portion of the old Wurdah district transferred to Nagpore consisted of 122 villages of pergunnah Baila, which by their position in proximity to the Capital seemed naturally to belong to the Nagpore district. The details of these exchanges are given in the Appendix in the Statement marked E.

Re-arrangement of Tehseel Circles.

141. The change in the boundaries of the district also necessiated a re-arrangement of administrative Circles or Tehseels. In re-casting those sub-divisions, the old pergunnah boundaries were not respected; nothing would have been gained by doing so. The villages had to be so distributed to make the tehseels as compact as possible, and in carrying out this object many of the old pergunnahs were broken up. The tehseels as re-cast, and as they now stand, consist of the following pergunnahs and portions of pergunnahs: (I.) The North or Arvee tehseel of the district was formed out of the Anjee pergunnah together with the Ashtee Pergunnah, and a part of the Khundalee pergunnah ceded by Nagpore. The subjoined Statement will give some idea of the size of this sub-division :—

Administrative Circles as they now stand.

THE ARVEE TEHSEEL.

Pergunnahs.	Villages.	Square Miles.	Population.	Revenue.
				Rs.
Ashtee	148	200	25,846	59,629
Khandalee	159	385	21,869	32,305
Anjee	178	262	32,200	61,855
TOTAL ...	485	847	79,915	1,53,789

142. The Head Quarters of this tehseel was fixed at the Great Cotton Mart of Arvee, a border town of the Anjee pergunnah. The 2nd the Central or Huzoor (Head Quarter) tehseel consists of the entire pergunnah of Nachengaon and Undoree; portions of pergunnahs

Anjee, Pownar, Baila, and Hingunghat, together with a few villages of Kelzur ceded by Nagpore. The Head Quarters of this tehseel are fixed at the Wurdah Station, which is also the Head Quarters of the district, the residence of the Deputy Commissioner and other Civil Officers. The following figures show the size of this tehseel as compared with the other sub-divisions of the district:—

THE HUZOOR TEHSEEL.

Pergunnahs.	Villages.	Square Miles.	Population.	Revenue.
				Rs.
Nachengaon	130	310	39,581	71,765
Undoree	100	157	40,091	45,510
Anjee	31	48	7,891	15,140
Pownar	88	117	17,239	38,150
Baila	9	21	7,334	7,130
Hingunghat	16	28	4,174	10,290
Kelzur	114	167	7,880	25,875
Total ...	488	842	124,190	2,13,860

143. The 3rd or last—the Hingunghat or south tehseel—includes the whole of pergunnah Pohona, the greater portion of Hingunghat, a few villages of Pownar and Baila, and all the villages of Girur ceded by Nagpore. This tehseel comprises 415 villages, and its area, &c., is shown below:—

THE SOUTH TEHSEEL OR HINGUNGHAT TEHSEEL.

Pergunnahs.	Villages.	Square Miles.	Population.	Revenue.
				Rs.
Pohona	103	207	28,358	46,455
Hingunghat	141	26	31,489	62,735
Powna	46	47	5,164	14,895
Baila	24	39	3,994	10,725
Girur	101	67	15,075	16,731
Total ...	415	486	84,880	1,51,541

142. The result of the re-arrangement of boundaries is briefly given in the Return as follows :—

Results attained.

THE NEW WURDAH DISTRICT.

Results.	Villages.	Square Miles.	Population.	Revenue.
				Rs.
Arvee	485	847	79,915	1,53,789
Huzoor	488	842	124,190	2,13,860
Hingunghat...	415	486	48,080	1,51,541
Total ...	1,338	2,175	252,185	5,19,190

And the Sketch Map will show that the re-distribution of territory transformed the irregular and badly arranged sub-division into a district convenient in size, compact in its jurisdiction, and well defined in its limits.

CHAPTER VIII.

PROPRIETARY RIGHT INVESTIGATIONS.

143. Whilst the measurement parties were busy surveying the village lands, the settlement officer and his assistant moved about from pergunnah to pergunnah, and besides testing the work of the subordinates, deciding boundary disputes and the various questions and differences that an officer's presence brought to the surface, commenced the investigation of claims to proprietary right. In other parts of India, where the existence of proprietary right in the soil has long been recognized, these investigations do not form part of the many operations that attend the assessment of the land revenue. In Nagpore and Wurdah, the determination of claims to proprietary right was one of the most important and onerous duties that the Settlement Department had to perform.

144. In the Rajah's time, each of the 988 valuable estates which constitute the Wurdah district, was leased out to a sort of lessee called a "Malgoozar," whose position was simply that of a farmer, and although ancestral tenure, and long possession were as a rule respected, still the farmer was always liable to be, and often was, ousted at the caprice, or to suit some purpose of the authorities of the day. On the lapse of the Nagpore province to the British Government, the farmers, then holding, were retained in possession *pending an enquiry into their claims to proprietary right*, and the summary settlements, which followed the introduction of our rule, were made with the farmers who had obtained the leases at the last settlement preceding the Rajah's death. They were still only farmers and their status remained unchanged until 1860, when on the recommendation of the late Colonel E. K. Elliott, the Supreme Government determined to bestow the right of absolute ownership in these estates (subject of course to the payment of the land revenue assessed on them) on those who could establish the best claim to that right.

Bestowal of proprietary right.

145. In recommending to the Supreme Government the recognition of proprietary right in the soil, Colonel Elliott represented that no such right had ever been admitted, although the incumbency of many of the farmers had been of sufficient duration to found a good claim thereto. But although in favor of declaring the farmers proprietors, Colonel Elliott recommended that their privileges and powers should be to some extent restricted. He was in favor of a proprietor being permitted to mortgage his estate for a term of years and of his sub-letting it on such conditions as might be approved by the district officer, but he did not recommend that the power of selling any part of the estate should be granted to the proprietor. The Supreme Government, however, intimated that it was not the desire of Gov-

Recommendation of Colonel Elliott.

Orders of the Supreme Government.

ernment to limit the privileges of the landholder any further than was rendered absolutely necessary by the feelings and interests of the agricultural community, and in sanctioning the bestowal of proprietary right, they directed that, subject to the condition of the payment of the land revenue, every farmer should receive as nearly as possible a fee simple in his estate, with full power to dispose of his interests in the land by sale, gift, mortgage, request, or otherwise as he might think fit. It is according to these terms that proprietary right in the land has been conferred on or recognized as belonging to the landholders of the Wurdah district, where estates are now as much their own property and as entirely at their own disposal as (to use the expression that is now familiar to the people) their cattle or their turbands, or the silver and gold bangles with which last a succession of favorable cotton seasons have enabled them to adorn their wrists.

146. The Government having thus relinquished its proprietary claim, the Settlement Department had to determine who, of the many claimants, were the best entitled to be declared proprietors of the estates of the Wurdah district. This was a very heavy task, for every farmer then in possession, and every ex-lessee who had ever held the lease of an estate, had some sort of claim of more or less strength, and as, under the Mahratta Government, villages had often changed hands in a very capricious manner, the number of claimants was exceedingly large. It may appear at first that it would perhaps have been better not to have entertained the claims of ex-lessees at all, and accepting the "locus standi" as it was at the time of the Rajah's death to have conferred proprietary right on the farmers found in possession when the country came under our rule. But many hard cases were known to exist of farmers of old standing who, owing either to the avarice of Government or the caprice of some Minister, had been ousted from villages which they had long held, and although it was obvious that it would be a hopless and endless task to attempt to remedy every injustice that had been done in the course of many years under a previous administration, still it was equally clear that the introduction of the regular settlement afforded the very best opportunity of settling definitely the grievances of the agricultural community. These grievances would have received more or less consideration even if the Native Government had continued to exist. The claim of incumbents, when resting only on the fact of their having received the lease from the late Government, was not altogether unassailable, inasmuch as the misfortunes of the rival claimant the ex-lessee proved the uncertainty of tenure under the Mahrattas. Moreover in some cases in which agricultural communities of long standing had but recently been ousted in favor of Court favorites, possessing no local interest or connection, who perhaps never went near their estates, it was clearly the interest of Government to re-instate the former lessee who could be more confidently depended upon for the development of the Government revenues than his careless successor. In changing the status of the landholder

Large number of claims of ex-lessees.

Reasons for admitting their claims.

and in selecting a person to succeed the Government as proprietor of an estate, it was obviously necessary to pay some regard to the security of the Government revenue, and as in many cases not only was this ensured but an act of justice was also done by the re-instalment of the former lessee, a double object was gained by the admission of the claims of persons out of possession.

Claims of persons out of possession entertained with great caution.

147. Still these claims were entertained with great caution. It was always assumed that the farmer in possession had *primâ facie* the best claim. It was laid down by Colonel Elliot as a general rule that "the claims of no parties will be admitted who may have been out of possession for more than two or three triennial settlements antecedent to the late ruler's death, that is supposing the party who succeeded to have been in continuous possession since that date," and this rule has been adhered to in determining claims to proprietary right. But the variety of the cases caused by the combination of different circumstances, tending to strengthen the title of the one claimant, and to weaken that of the other, were infinite, and as each had to be decided on its merits, some departure from the above rule has, under very peculiar circumstances, occasionally taken place. Although as the strength or weakness of the title of the man in possession varied inversely with the nature of the title set forth by the rival claimant, no rule based on the possession of the incumbent for a certain number of years could possibly be adhered to, still possession was duly respected by the Settlement Department, and no case has come to my knowledge, in which a lessee, who by twelve years' possession, had acquired for himself a prescriptive title, has not received proprietary right in either the whole or part of the estate.

Results of investigations.

148. I labor under some disadvantages in attempting to describe the proprietary right investigations in Wurdah, inasmuch as the work was for the most part concluded before I joined the Settlement Department. Some few cases have come before me on appeal, which have generally been decided by one of the principles mentioned above; but a careful table of the results of the determination of claims to proprietary right has been prepared and will be found in an Appendix to this report. The figures speak for themselves, and hardly require any remarks from me. The principles on which the claims have been decided, and the results of the investigations as affecting the farmers who were in possession at the time of the late Rajah's death, will be seen at a glance.

Plan of table of results.

149. It is however necessary to explain the plan on which the table has been framed. The figures showing the length of tenure and the period of dispossession of claimants all refer to the number of years the claimant had been in possession or out of possession up to the year of the Rajah's death, and the reason for selecting the year 1857—as the meridian from which to measure contending claims is this that from the date of the Rajah's death up to the time that the investigation of proprietary right cases was commenced by the

Settlement Department, no claim of this descriptions was listenedto in the district courts. The lessees found in possession when the British Government took over the country were maintained "pending an enquiry into their rights." This of course included an enquiry into the rights of aggrieved parties out of possession. But although claims to be re-instated in villages soon began to pour into the district courts, the Deputy Commissioners entertained no such applications. The advent of the regular settlement being expected, the order invariably passed was that "this petition will stand over uutil the introduction of the regular settlement, when the petitioner's claim will be duly enquired into by the settlement officer." This order soon became stereotyped, and by degrees began to be applied to all claims connected with land. This form of procedure soon became known to the people, who very naturally spared themselves the trouble of preferring claims which they knew could not be investigated.

Claims not heard in district courts pending advent of the settlement.

150. Under these circumstances, it was, I think, only fair to treat all proprietary right claims as having been "pending" during the interval which elapsed between the Rajah's death and the commencement of the investigations. This view was, I believe, taken in deciding proprietary cases, and it is only by preparing the table in the manner above indicated that the real action of the settlement courts can be shown. The settlement was long in coming, but the delay was not the fault of the unfortunate claimants, who it may be fairly presumed would have urged their claims sooner if any opportunity of preferring them had been afforded. Under the circumstances mentioned above, it would be better not to allow the years that were thus permitted to pass to count in favor of the farmer who was perhaps unfairly in possession, and to permit those years to swell the period of possession on which the incumbent would found a prescriptive title in the estate, and in the same manner to allow them to weigh against the claim of the unfortunate ex-lessee, and to widen the gap existing in his connection with his former village.

Lapsed period how treated.

151. The results of the proprietary right investigations may be thus briefly recapitulated. Of the 988 estates in Wurdah, the right of the farmer in possession at the time of the Rajah's death was contested in 354 estates, or 60 per cent. of the villages remained uncontested. The total number of cases instituted amounted to 470. This exceeds the number of villages, and is accounted for by the fact that so many as six different claimants appeared in some villages to contest the right of the incumbent to be declared proprietor. Of these cases the claims of parties out of possession were admitted in 130 cases instituted. Thus present possession was disturbed in 21 per cent. of cases, and 36 per cent. of the estates of Wurdah, the proprietary right of which was contested, changed hands. But this apparently high figure is modified by the fact that in 49 villages, although the claim of the ex-lessee was admitted, he only obtained *a share* in the estate, the incumbent retaining

Summary of results of investigation.

the possession of the remaining portion. Thus in only 17 per cent. of cases instituted, or 26 per cent of villages contested, did the lessees in possession lose the entire interest in the estate held by them at the time of the Rajah's death, and in only 8 per cent. of the villages of Wurdah was possession disturbed by the action of the settlement courts. It is further to be noted that of the 81 persons ousted, not one had held for 12 years, many of them had only been put in at the last summary settlement, whereas the persons re-instated had held on an average for 20 years each, and had been out of possession for but short periods. Every consideration was nevertheless shown to the "Muccadums" or ancestral right-holders out of possession, and when in consequence of the strong prescriptive title earned by the then incumbent, it was not possible to oust him, the Muccadum was invariably made proprietor of his holding (that is of the fields which he continued to cultivate) on the favorable conditions described in Chapter XIII on tenures.

Investigations exhaustive and satisfactory.

152. These figures will, I hope, show that the proprietary right investigations in the Wurdah district have been exhaustive and satisfactory. I cannot take any credit to myself for this, inasmuch as the investigations had been virtually completed before I took charge of the settlement, but I can bear testimony to the general feeling in the district regarding the manner in which the investigations were conducted, and to the satisfaction of the people with the awards that have been made, and with the care and patience with which conflicting claims have been weighed and disposed of.

Proprietary right claims invited by notification.

153. Every facility has been given to the people of preferring claims, and every care has been taken to impress upon them the value of the right at stake. That they have availed themselves fully of the opportunities offered is, I think, indicated by the figures given in the statement. At first starting, the claims were not very numerous. This was perhaps partly owing to the apathy of the Mahrattas, but chiefly to their not understanding what was passing around them. In fact I learn that in the Nagpore district the number of claims instituted up to March 1861 was so small as to leave no doubt that the people did not appreciate the action that was being taken by the settlement courts. This necessitated the issuing of a notification, a portion of which is here extracted, in which the objects of the settlement operations were explained to the landholders.

Extract of notification.

"This notification is issued in order that opportunity may be afforded to claimants through out the district to come forward and make known the nature and extent of their claims, whether on the score of former incumbency or otherwise.

"Such claims were not enquired into at the time of the summary settlements through misapprehension of the instructions contained in the "Dustoor-ool-umul" issued at the period of the lapse. In directing that the summary settlement should be made with parties in possession, leaving the rights of claimants to be determined hereafter, or

at the period of a regular settlement, it was not intended that claims preferred should not be enquired into by the district officers, and disposed of on their merits at subsequent summary settlements. Where parties may have preferred such claims during the first years of the British administration, and were instructed to await the regular settlement, they will be entitled to special consideration.

"Where the lease may have been in the name of two or more parties jointly responsible for the payment of the Government demand, such responsibility shall be maintained until a complete division of the mehal and assessment of a distinct jumma on each portion of it has been made.

"The members of the malgoozar's family and the share, if any, that each may have in the estate, or where they may not be co-sharers, the terms on which they cultivate their lands, if they have any holdings, will be ascertained and recorded in the administration paper to be drawn out for each village at the time of settlement.

"The party on whom proprietary right will be conferred will not be at liberty to dispose of the property by private sale, nor will it be saleable for arrears of revenue, except as a last resort when all other means have failed, and it will not be liable to sale under any circumstances in satisfaction of a decree of the civil court, but a malgoozar may mortgage his property for a term of years under restrictions, and will be allowed to sub-let it with the sanction of the district officer. These instructions, as already explained, were subsequently modified."

This notification had the desired effect, those who had real claims to prefer no longer delayed to come forward, and as the settlement officer generally took up proprietary right claims pergunnah by pergunnah as he passed through them on his tour, selecting for his halting place some village regarding which there was a dispute, or which was in the very centre of a circle of contested villages, justice was brought home to the claimants. It cost nothing to prefer a claim in the settlement courts, and thus even many who felt that their title could not be compared with those of the man in possession, came into court and "tried their luck," as they called it, a proceeding by which they could not lose, and by which they might possibly gain. Care was also taken that no person whose claim to re-gain a village appeared from the village records to be, *primâ facie*, good, should lose the chance which the investigations afforded him solely from not understanding or appreciating what was going on, and from his consequent failure to prefer a claim. In all cases where the right of the incumbent was not ancestral, the record was carefully examined to see how long he had held, and to ascertain the circumstances under which the former holder had lost the village. When such a course appeared desirable, the ex-lessee, if he did not appear, would be sent for, the case explained to him, and his claims considered. But in a very short time the backwardness of the claimants to come forward wore off, and the number of cases instituted steadily increased, until December 1865, when they began to diminish by degrees, and at last wore themselves out, no man who possessed even the shadow of a claim not having made the best of it. No limit was

fixed to the period in which a claim should be preferred, and within the last week claims have been instituted in my court, although, of course, delay in coming forward, unless satisfactorily explained, is regarded with suspicion. The superior courts too exercised full check over the cases decided. From the assistant settlement officer's order conferring proprietary right, there has been an appeal to the settlement officer, the settlement officer's order again has been appealed to the Settlement Commissioner, and that officer's decision, although perhaps confirming the orders of the two lower courts, has again been appealed to the Chief Commissioner, the last court of appeal. That this privilege of appeal has been largely exercised by the people, the figures in the table given in the Appendix will show.

Proportion of cases judicially decided to compromises.

154. Lastly the number of cases judicially decided does not, I believe, represent more than half of the cases that have been *settled* by the people among themselves. The return does not show the compromises that have been effected, the private understandings come to, or the concessions made. I know of cases in which a landholder rather than have the trouble of contesting a case in court, has stopped a troublesome fellow's mouth, who perhaps possessing but a slight claim, threatened to come forward, by giving him one or two fields, and the cases settled by compromise are doubtless very numerous. The concessions thus made being the result of terms proposed and accepted, after the full measure of squabbling, and discussion by the parties most concerned, and who consequently may be presumed to be fair judges of their own interests, are nearly certain to be fair and satisfactory to both sides, and I hope that the terms thus come to will be respected as far as possible, and that no departure from them will be permitted.

Proprietary right investigations finally concluded.

155. All claims to proprietary right in the Wurdah district may, I hope, now be considered to be finally settled, and I hope that no more claims will, under any circumstances, be entertained.

A non-resident or "*Pahee*" cultivator, holding uninterrupted possession for 20 years, has been recorded as a "Qudeem," or having a hereditary title.

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CHAPTER IX.

THE PROFESSIONAL SURVEY.

156. Whilst the settlement officer was busy hearing proprietary right appeals, moving about the district, testing the work of the subordinates, and keeping them up to the mark, the settlement staff and the Pandiahs, who by this time had become capable of affording some assistance, were still engaged in measuring and plotting the maps of the villages.

Work of settlement staff tested by professional survey.

157. A party of the professional survey under Captain Vanrenen, driven from the Saugor and Nerbudda territories by the disturbed state in which the mutiny of 1857 had thrown those districts, followed the measurement ameens of the Settlement Department and tested their work, so as to preclude the possibility of the data on which the settlement officer had to found his assessments being incorrect. The result of the comparison of areas made by the professional survey was favorable to the work of the Settlement Department, as the statement in the Appendix shows. The professional survey, whilst employed on this duty, also prepared careful village and pergunnah maps on which the large map of the Wurdah district is founded. These detailed maps will be made over to the Deputy Commissioner at the conclusion of the settlement, and will form a valuable addition to the district records.

Results of comparison.

Completion of work.

158. By June 1859, the maps of the Hingunghat pergunnah prepared by the Settlement Department, were ready, the measurements of the other pergunnahs wer completed soon afterwards, and, as mentioned above, their accuracy was duly tested by the professional survey. In the mean time, the settlement officer, by continually moving about and mixing freely with the people, had gained a very good general knowledge of the district. The measurements of the estates of one pergunnah having been completed, there was no great delay in preparing the statistics on which the settlement officer had in a great degree to depend in making his assessments. The ameen noted in his book the quality of the soil in each field of a village, and the map showed the exact extent of that field. The cultivated land was duly shown in the Shajrah, or map of the village lands, so also the uncultivated, the culturable land, and the barren waste. These statistics having been tested in the settlement officer's office at head quarters, were tabulated in a return called the "General Statement," a specimen sheet of which forms Appendix G to this report. This statement contains the name of every village in the pergunnah, and under the appropriate headings were shown, in addition to the qualities and quantities of the cultivated and uncultivated land, such

Preparation of statistics for assessments.

The general statement.

additional statistics representing the resources and history of the village as would assist the settlement officer in coming to a conclusion as to the amount of the Government demand which could fairly be assessed on the village. Thus the number of ploughs in use in the village, the total of the population, both agricultural and non-agicultural, the extent of the landholder's private farm, if he had one, the number of wells in use, and other information gathered by the ameen during his stay in the village, whilst engaged in measuring the fields, were duly entered. The statement also contained three columns showing the revenue assessed on the estate at former settlements, from which figures the fiscal history of the village, its improvement or gradual decline, could be traced. Lastly, the general statement also showed the existing revenue of each village.

Inspection of villages by settlement officer.

160. Furnished with these statistics, the settlement officer commenced what are technically called his "inspections"—that is to say, he set about visiting in detail every estate in the pergunnah of the land revenue of which he was charged with revising. During the tour which this duty entailed, the settlement officer and an excellent opportunity of noticing the physical features and peculiarities of the country. The observations thus made would stand him in good stead when dividing the pergunnahs into "chuks" or circles for assessment; he then went from village to village examining the lands, noticing the general appearance of the village homestead, of the people and of the cattle, and recorded his remarks and general impressions in his note book. Having all the details contained in the general statement with him, he was able to compare the rates paid by villages situated in the same localities and possessing apparently similar advantages. If any striking differences showed themselves, being on the spot, he could try and account for them, and would perhaps find out that one village paid little more than half as much as its neighbour, because its lands were subject to the inundations of the river which destroyed the crops, or he would perhaps ascertain that the low-paying village was held by the Deshpandia, a powerful Brahmin official, who under a native government had escaped easily. All these circumstances he could duly note in his book, to assist him when the land revenue to be assessed on the village came under consideration; but moving about, he could gather much valuable information not only from what he saw, but more particularly from what he heard, and I believe that settlement officers attach more importance to, and rely more on the information they collect as they move about and mix freely with the people, than upon their own impressions resulting from actual inspection, though inspection is held to be very valuable when it follows up and tests information gathered from intelligent persons in the pergunnah. Seated round the camp fire of an evening, the landholder's reserve begins to thaw, and by degrees he will discuss freely the merits of the villages of the neighbourhood; how lucky the Deshpandiah is, how tigers and bad harvests have brought such nad such a village to the brink of ruin; and though no man will ever admit

Value of inspections.

that *he* himself is fairly off, he will not scruple to tell you of the merits of his neighbours' villages, or to discuss the comparative values of the adjoining estates held by his friends. Next day these very friends, though careful enough of their own interests, will let you into the secrets of the management of your informant of the evening before and of their neighbours; and the settlement officer having taken the level of one village will not find it very difficult to measure with the help of what you have gathered from the landholders themselves, the comparative merits of all the estates of the pergunnah. Then comes the value of personal inspection; you commence to test the information you have received, and where you find yourself at fault, being on the spot, the process of rectification is not difficult. You will discuss the relative merits of villages openly before the landholders, and although you will not be able to learn from them the actual value of one single village, still the comparative value of the whole pergunnah will after a little trouble be pretty correctly worked out.

CHAPTER X.

ASSESSMENT OF THE HINGUNGHAT AND POHONA PERGUNNAHS.

Hingunghat and Pohona.

161. Hingunghat was the first pergunnah assessed. Mr. McGeorge had inspected the villages, and prepared revised assessments before Mr. Bernard joined the appointment of settlement officer. These proposed assessments were submitted by Mr. Bernard, together with his own recommendations, to the Commissioner of the Nagpore division in June 1863. They were with some slight modifications sanctioned and announced to the people in October 1863 of the same year. The Pohona pergunnah was grouped by Mr. Bernard with Hingunghat for the purposes of assessments, as these two pergunnahs lie together in the south-east of the district, and resembling one another in character and possessing the same physical features, had nearly all the details on which the assessment is based in common.

Hingunghat and Pohona pergunnahs, grouped together for purposes of assessment.

Position and capabilities of the pergunnahs.

162. The following details abstracted from the report submitted by Mr. Bernard with the revised assessments show the capabilities of the pergunnahs, the principles on what the assessments were made, and the results of the revision. These two pergunnahs are situated in the south-east corner of the district, and stretch from the Wurdah to the outlying spurs of the Sautpoorahs described in Chapter VII of this report. Hingunghat boasts of the large market town which gives its name to the pergunnah. Mandgaon is a large village, the head quarters of a considerable agricultural population, rather than a town. In Pohona there is no place of any importance save Alipoor, a large village of the same description as Mandgaon. Pohona itself, once the head quarters of the pergunnah, is now a broken down village, which for its out-of-the-way position does not appear to have much hope of improvement. The old Deccan Road connecting Nagpore with Chandah runs through Hingunghat, and in all directions are to be found small country roads converging to this really noted mart. The Pohona pergunnah being situated in an out-of-the-way corner is only skirted by, and does not enjoy the full advantages of, the new branch roads made in this part of the district.

Branch roads.

Statistics.

162. The areas of the Hingunghat and Pohona pergunnahs amount to 183,383 acres, or 287 square miles, and 132,640 acres, or 207 square miles respectively. The number of estates in these pergunnahs is Hingunghat 157, and Pohona 103, giving to the Hingunghat estates an average area of 1,168 acres, or nearly two square miles each, to those situated in Pohona 1,288 acres, or a little more than two square miles

each. The cultivated area of the two pergunnahs is 135,516 acres for Hingunghat, and 96,338 for Pohona. The culturable and fallow lands amount to 29,580 acres in Hingunghat, and 23,576 acres in Pohona. The barren waste in these two pergunnahs is 12,551 acres and 9,512 acres respectively. Thus in each of these pergunnahs about 90 per cent. of the whole area is either cultivated or culturable. The fallow lands are almost 22 per cent. in Hingunghat, and more than 24 per cent. in Pohona of the cultivated land. The barren waste is 7 per cent of the total area of both, in Hingunghat and Pohona. The qualities of the soil of the cultivated lands which have been classified in the manner already explained, are shown in the annexed table :—

Soils.	Hingunghat.	Pohona.
	Acres.	Acres.
1st Class	37,511	24,487
2nd „	74,594	46,904
3rd „	18,436	22,363
4th „	4,519	2,162
Total ...	135,060	95,916
Irrigated ...	456	422
Total Cultivated ...	135,516	96,338

163. The area of rent-free plots in these pergunnahs is as follows :—

Rent-free Plots, Wells, Census, and Casts.

	Plots.	Fields.	Acres.
Hingunghat	392	409	5,736
Pohona	182	208	3,214

Thus nearly 3 per cent. of the total area of these pergunnahs escaped assessment. The number of wells in Hingunghat is 312, in Pohona 424. About half of these wells, Mr. Bernard believes, are used for irrigation. Considering the facilities for sinking wells offered by the geological strata and the extent of the pergunnahs, the number of wells and the irrigated area, which is one-third per cent on the cultivated area, is undoubtedly small; but the causes which up to the present time have militated against the extension of irrigation cultivation

have been alluded to elsewhere, and need not be re-capitulated here. The population according to the census, formed on the average number of inhabitants per house, multiplied by the ascertained number of houses, is in Hingunghat 35,582, or 124 souls to the square mile, and in Pohona 28,358, or 137 souls to the square mile. The castes are the same as in other parts of the district, the cultivators being chiefly Koonbees, Telees, and Malees; Koonbees being by far the most numerous, and Comptees, Koshtees, Sonars, and Gonds being sometimes found among the cultivators.

Division into circles for assessments.

164. The statistics from which these figures have been taken were ready about the time Mr. Bernard joined the settlement, and Mr. MacGeorge, aided by the guides which these figures afforded and by his personal knowledge of the pergunnahs, had divided the villages into chuks or groups for assessment. Owing to the physical features of the Wurdah division, it was found impossible to split up either of the pergunnahs into groups of villages, so that all the villages in each group shoud be kindred in soil and in other physical characteristics, and also be included within a ring fence. The villages, therefore, instead of being grouped according to their geographical position, were classified according to their physical features. In Hingunghat, Mr. MacGeorge divided the villages into three groups,—villages that were good, middling, and bad. These again were afterwards split up into two sub-divisions. This classification was grounded, Mr. Bernard describes, on Mr. MacGeorge's personal observation, on the opinion of the tehseeldar and his staff, and on the general voice of the people so far as it could be ascertained; and although the grounds on which the sub-division was made, may, as Mr. Bernard observes, appear vague, there was not, however, room for much error, for the differences of soil are clearly marked. Mr. MacGeorge's inspections were close and searching, and the opinions of the pergunnah officials which he took to steady his judgment were, from their great local experience, accurate and valuable.

Hingunghat chuks or circles.

Pohona circles.

165. The Pohona chuks were framed by Mr. Bernard himself. As in Hingunghat it was found impossible to group in one class a number of villages geographically contiguous. Villages however of two very different classes presented themselves in the pergunnah:—those situated in the trough of the soil-waves where the soil was rich, and those situated on the sides, or on the crest of these waves where the soil was scant and inferior. The villages were accordingly divided into two groups, in one of which were placed the lowland villages, in the other the villages of the uplands. The first group included all the villages on the bank, or within the basin of the Wurdah or its tributaries. The second included all the villages on high ground, beyond the immediate influence of the Wurdah or its affluents. Thus in Hingunghat, the classification was with reference to the quality of the soil in each village; in Pohona, according to the physical features of the country.

166. In framing the assessments, the former fiscal history of the pergunnah as shown by the old revenue was of considerable value, and was duly considered by Mr. Bernard. He found the former revenues to have been as follows:—

Fiscal history of the pergunnahs.

	Number.	Hingunghat.	Pohona.
Nana Sahib from Fusly 1242-44, or A. D. 1832-1834 ...	I	...	54,151
Gholam Alee from Fusly 1248-50, or A. D. 1838-1840	II	84,621	54,948
Dajee Sahib from Fusly 1260-62, or A. D. 1850-1852 ...	III	89,531	51,512
Summary Settlement	IV	71,941	44,866

Of the settlements made under Native rule, those made by the Nana Sahib at the termination of the Jenkins' regency had the character among the people of being fair, and the memory of the Nana Sahib is still gratefully remembered. The assessment of the Mahomedan in Fusly 1248 had also the credit of being fair, neither heavy nor light, but the settlement made by the Dajee Sahib is represented to have been ruinous to the landholders, and his memory is execrated. Mr. Bernard points out that the above comparison shows that the Dajee Sahib's assessments, instead of being the heaviest in Pohona, were the lightest of the three, and he argues that if the relative incidence of the jummas was in reality as described, it follows that the paying power of the pergunnah has been rapidly declining, and he believes that the country until the last few years, partly through the extravagance of the Bhonslahs, and partly through the inroads of the Pindarees, did decline. Some ground was gained during the first few years of British administration, under which the summary assessments No. IV in the foregoing table were framed. These assessments followed pretty nearly the Mahratta, the then Company's Rupee being substituted for the Nagpore Rupee at an exchange of 117, which was rather in favor of the landholder. It is said, with all this information before him and having formed his chuks, Mr. Bernard proceeded to cast his rates for working out the assessments or chuks prescribed to steady the settlement officer in assessing.

167. In preparing an assumed rent rate, it became necessary to enquire at what rates the declared rent-roll fell on the acre, and then to consider how far that could be taken as a basis for an assumed rent rate. As these enquiries and the deductions drawn there-

Mode of preparing rent rates.

from form the basis on which Mr. Bernard's assessments were built, I think I cannot do better than let him describe the process and the results in his own words.

"I found the declared rent-roll to fall as follows:"—

	In Hingunghat.		In Pohona.	
	A.	P.	A.	P.
On an acre of total area	7	9	6	6
Ditto assessment	9	2	7	2
Ditto cultivation	10	3	8	8

Mr. Bernard's description of the rent rates.

"If the declared rent-rolls are thoroughly correct, then the profit left to the landholder is very small, much below the proportion of the rent which the settlement officer is, under the rules, obliged to allow him.

"The question then suggests itself, do these rents represent the whole receipts of the landholder from his lands and his tenants? Does he make no profits beyond the small margin out of the rents which the jumma leaves him? I am sorry to say that I can give to this question no very satisfactory or conclusive answer.

"Mr. MacGeorge considers that the landholder derives some profit from his home-farm over and above the profits which the declared rent-roll leaves him. In some villages he farms much land himself. The lands of his holding are generally considerably below the rent-rates obtainable in the village. When the profits on his home-farm held at low rents have been computed, Mr. MacGeorge considers that, for the rest, the rent-rolls of the Hingunghat pergunnah are singularly correct. He computes that extra profits on home-farms and probable profits to be realized in the proximate future, in consequence of the additional value conferred on land by a regular settlement, and the opening of new communications, may amount to 15 per cent. on the declared rent-roll. He would accordingly adopt as *one*, but the only basis for his assumed rent-rates is the declared rent-roll, plus 15 per cent. thereon. I find that an intelligent native official, the Canoongo of Hingunghat, holds this same theory—that 15 per cent. above the declared rent-roll is on an average the highest estimate that can be reasonably made of village rents. I cannot say that this estimate is a wrong one, but I would say that it is somewhat arbitrary, and rests on no very sure grounds.

"The taxable profits accruing to the landholder from the low rents at which he holds his home-farm jote malgoozaree, and also the benefits he may receive from granting fields at low rents to his priests or to his relatives, are beyond the realm of doubt. The measurement papers

for each village afford very ample data for computing the difference between average village rent-rates and the rents at which the landholder's fields and his friends' fields are held.

"But it is to me altogether a matter of doubt whether a landholder does or does not receive from his tenants something beyond the rents shown in the rent-rolls. As I am not very confident that you will share the opinion at which I have arrived, I will note some of the points for and against the correctness of these entries.

"1*st*.—The tehseel officials and the old pergunnah officers, without exception, profess a belief that the rent-rolls, with a very few exceptions, are correct exponents of actual taxable village assets.

"2*nd*.—Every rent case litigated between landlord and tenant is decided according to the rent-roll alone. Therefore every landholder must know that, under existing practice, he cannot by force of law compel his tenant to pay enhanced rents.

"3*rd*.—Actions brought for enhancement of rent are litigated with much acrimony by tenants, and decisions have hitherto been generally adverse to landlords.

"4*th*.—In two several cases within my knowledge, a decree has been given allowing enhancement of rent, and the landholders have been unable to realize such enhancement because the tenants declared their intention to throw up their holding if enhanced rents were demanded of them. It seemed clear that the recusants would carry out their threat, and the landholders chose to forego their legal dues rather than undergo the trouble and annoyance of finding new tenants.

"5*th*.—The hereditary and better class of tenants often know what rents are shown against their holdings in the rent-rolls, and are aware that, under present practice, nothing beyond those sums can be recovered from them.

"The considerations which allow me to think that the landholders do realize from their tenants more than the declared rents are.—

"1*st*.—The pergunnah officers may be right when they say that under the name of rent, nothing is collected from tenants beyond what the rent-rolls show, but there may be other petty sources of revenue to landlords. At the time of 'istimalat,' or lease-granting, the tenant may make some small present when his lease is renewed. He may renew such a present at harvest time and at other auspicious seasons of the year. For instance, when a landlord enters a tenant's grain-yard, it is in many villages customary for the tenant to make offering of grain or coin to his visitor.

"2*nd*.—The number of rent cases litigated is wonderfully small, barely 45 cases a year for each lakh of land revenue. It is quite possible that tenants-at-will may, by private arrangement, pay more than the rents entered in the rent-rolls, and that neither lessor nor lessee ever has recourse to courts of law."

"3*rd*.—Any one who goes into a village must be struck by the wide difference between the house, grain-stores, cattle, &c., of the landlord and those of any ordinary cultivator. The difference in appearance of wealth is far wider than can be accounted for by his alleged 'peculium' and the profits on his home farm.

"4th.—During the last fortnight the business of 'istimalat' or lease-granting has been going on, and several cultivators have complained to me that their landlords have refused to renew engagements with them. I have not heard their cases, because if their was any injustice done them, the courts were open and they might plead their causes. But from their narratives it appeared that their fields had been leased to other men who had made the landlords larger presents.

"These are meagre grounds for forming a judgment, but I would offer as my opinion that ancient hereditary cultivators held their lands at the rents entered in the rent-rolls, and made no further payment to the landlord unless it be a small present at seed time and at harvest. But with tenants-at-will who sometimes rent this field and sometimes that, and who often move from one village to another, I believe the case to be different. For good lands in good villages, tenants-at-will often bid against each other, and so the landlords often realize from tenants-at-will higher payments than the rent-rolls show, though I cannot say whether the payment takes the form of enhanced rates, or of larger presents. In whatever form the present be made, the arrangement is private, but it is an arrangement which the tenant dare not break, as its infraction would involve his eviction next seed time.

"Many landlords make some income by advancing seed and corn to their tenants, on condition it be repaid at harvest time with an addition of 25 per cent. This income is not liable to any demand on account of land revenue, but its existence deserves to be noticed, as it may explain in some cases the manifest wealth of the landlords, who according to the rent-rolls make a yearly loss on their villages.

"Every Malgoozar who has filed a rent-roll for the last 30 years, has had before his eyes the prospect of an impending revision of settlement within four years at farthest. He has always considered that the amount of revenue he would be required to pay would depend to some extent upon the amount of assests he might return; and it would be somewhat extraordinary, if after the lapse of a generation, landholders had not become accustomed to systematically undervaluing their assests. For the last three years, there have been village accountants in the Wurdah district. But the most honest and intelligent Putwaree cannot ensure the correctness of all the rent-rolls of his circle. To be truly correct, entries should be made as leases are given, and lease-granting is going on in all his villages at once. It is impossible for the Putwaree to be present in all the villages at the same time, and so he ends by filing in the rent-rolls at the dictation of the Malgoozar. I can offer no estimate of the average incorrectness of rent-rolls, I believe the incorrectness varies universally as the number of hereditary tenants, and varies directly with the excellence of the land. Whatever be the amount of incorrectness, I am clearly of opinion that the declared rent-rolls are not so reliable that regular rent rates can be usefully deduced from them. The only safe basis for assuming such rates are existing and past rents, as explained by existing and past assessments. But before determining on any chuk-rates, it was necessary for the assessing officer to make up his mind whether, on a review of all the circumstances, he was to anticipate a reduction or an enhancement of the land revenue. Before we

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came face to face with the actual figures, both Mr. MacGeorge and myself expected that some considerable reduction would be called for. Mr. MacGeorge had known the Hingunghat pergunnah for two years, and was of opinion that the jummas of many villages were too high. We had both read in the Chief Commissioner's administration report that the last assessments of the Nagpore province were supposed to be somewhat high and uneven. We were aware that the uniform mode of teaching practised in other parts of India was that the first revision of settlement made under Act IX of 1833, resulted in a reduction of summary assessments that were based on previously existing native revenue. With these anticipations, and after a tolerably minute inspection of our respective pergunnahs, we turned to the statement of statistics with the impression that, in some villages, reduction was absolutely necessary, that, judging from the aspect of villages, cattle and fields, and from the aggregate of reliable testimony, the assessments were in general high, rather than low, and enhancements were practicable in only a few villages.

"Before adopting rates for the chuks or groups of villages, we gathered from the compiled statistics that the rate per acre at which the existing revenue fell in the villages was :—

	On Total Area.		On Total Malgoozaree.		On Total Cultivation.	
For Hingunghat	6	9	8	...	9	0½
For Pohona...	5	9	6	5	7	9

"The incidence of the jumma on the cultivated area of each chuk was in Hingunghat—

Chuk I A.								11	1
„ B.								9	2
„ II.								8	5
„ III.								5	2

IN POHONA.

	Total Area.		Total Malgoozaree.		Total Cultivation.	
Chuk I	6	6	7	2	8	6
„	1	4	4	7	5	9

"These rates, considering that the valley of the Wurdah is reported to be very good soil, were light beyond all precedent. They were lower than the rates in the pergunnah of Nagpore, which were reputed to resemble these two pergunnahs in physical characteristics. These rates were lower than the rates prevailing in any but the most sterile and desert districts of Northern India.

"It appeared however on further enquiry that those pergunnahs of the Nagpore district which resembled the Wurdah valley in soil were more populous and more highly irrigated than either Hingunghat or Pohona. It also appeared that the current assessments, though light when compared with assessments in other parts of India, had not borne those fruits which assessments absolutely light have eslewhere borne. The revenue was collected from many villages with much difficulty, and instalments from some villages were habitually in arrears. There were very few evidences that agriculturists were wealthy or even well-off. They* do not indulge in litigation, a luxury of which opulent Hindoos are generally very fond. They spend comparatively little on marriages, the family stores of "pots and pans" are meagre. When a cultivator's bullock dies, instead of replacing it at once as a man who had the means would, he tries to get the work of four bullocks out of three, and so loses more bullocks and becomes poerer still.

* The yearly returns will show that the revenue and civil courts in the Wurdah valley are not troubled with many suits to which agriculturists are parties.

"These are some of the considerations which induced us, after we had inspected all the villages of our pergunnahs, to believe that the total land revenue raised from these two pergunnahs could not be enhanced, and that in some villages the jummas must at once be reduced.

"The existing revenue fell heavier in Hingunghat than it did in Pohona, but then the lands of the first division of the first chuk or group in Hingunghat, were better than the lands of any villages of Pohona, Alipoor, and two or three other villages alone being excepted; and in Pohona, cultivators had a greater habit of emigrating across the river than they had in Hingunghat. Not that the lands are to be had for nothing in Berar, but in some villages of Berar land is undoubtedly very cheap,* and though in reality very many cultivators have not emigrated, yet tenants in villages along the Wurdah threaten to emigrate, and by means of this threat have often induced landholders to lower their rents. We set ourselves to the work of assessment with the intention of rectifying irregularities, and giving reduction where circumstances seemed to call loudlly for it. We were prepared also to enhance assessments where enhancement might seem possible.

"After carefully analyzing the rent-rolls of four rent-free or quit-rent villages, and the rent-rolls of several khalsa or revenue paying villages in each pergunnah, and after ascertaining the rents at which holders of rent-free fields, themselves non-agriculturists, rented their

fields to cultivators, we agreed to adopt the following rent-rates, varying with each kind of soil as follows:—

	First Kalee.		Second Kalee.		Moorund.		Khurdee.			Retharee.			Burdee.	
	R.	A.	R.	A.	R.	A.	R.	A.	P.	R.	A.	P.	A.	P.
Chuk I A. ...	2	0	1	12	1	8	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	6
„ B. ...	1	8	1	4	1	0	0	12	0	0	0	12	0	4
„ II. ...	1	4	1	0	0	12	0	8	0	0	0	8	0	4
„ III. ...	1	4	0	12	0	8	0	6	0	0	0	6	0	4

POHONA.

	First Kalee		Second Kalee.		Moorund.		Khurdee.		Retharee.		Burdee.	
	R.	A.	R.	A.	R.	A.	R.	A.	R.	A.	R.	A.
Chuk I.	1	8	1	4	1	0	0	12	0	12	0	4
„ II.	0	0	0	12	0	10	0	7	0	7	0	4

"Taking 60 per cent. as the State share and 40 per cent. as the landholder's share of the rent, these rent-rates give us jumma rates.

HINGUNGHAT.

	First Kalee.			Second Kalee.			Moorund.		Khurdee.		Retharee.		Burdee.	
	R.	A.	P.	R.	A.	P.	A.	P	A.	P.	A.	P.	A.	P.
Chuk I. A ..	1	3	2	1	0	10	14	5	9	7	9	7	3	7
„ B ...	0	14	5	0	12	6	9	7	7	2	7	2	2	5
„ II. ...	0	14	5	0	9	7	7	2	4	10	4	10	2	5
„ III. ...	0	14	5	0	7	2	4	10	3	7	3	7	2	5

POHONA.

	First Kalee.		Second Kalee.		Moorund.		Khurdee.		Retharee.		Burdee.	
Chuck I.	14	5	12	6	9	7	7	2	7	2	2	5
„ II.	0	0	7	2	6	0	4	2	4	2	2	5

"Assessments at these rates were worked out for each village and entered in a column of the statements.

"It remained then to deduce revised assessments from the existing revenue, and from the rates assumed for the several chuks or groups. To assist us in doing this, we had the fiscal history of each village as told in the ancient assessments. To ascertain the administrative history of the village, we had recourse to old records, to ancient pergunah officer, and to the tehseeldar and his Canoongo. From these sources we learned what villages had often changed hands and for what causes, which landholders were usually in arrears, and which paid their instalments punctually. In order further to assist our judgment, we took a plough-rate, that is, we calculated the average amounts of revenue that fell upon a plough in each chuk or group. This rate we multiplied by the number of ploughs recorded to be found in the village, and thus arrived at a plough rate. We also ascertained the amount of land held by the landholder himself, and his immediate relations, and calculated the probable profits gained by holding those lands at low rents.

"The result of our personal inspections also helped us to judge what villages required reductions. The pergunnah Canoongo was besides us while we were working at our assessments, and we were able very frequently to consult the ancient pergunnah Deshmookhs and Deshpandias. The assessments proposed will be found in the last column but two."

The worked-out rates.

168. The jummas (assessments) worked out by the rates were as follows, and are here compared, with the then existing jumma :—

	Hingunghat.	Pohona.
Existing jumma	72,410	44,954
Revised ditto	73,025	46,505

169. The rate at which the old jumma and new jumma fell on the acre of cultivated land is shown below.

Comparison and effect of rates.

	Old Jumma.		Revised Jumma.	
	A.	P.	A.	P.
Hingunghat	9	0½	8	6
Pohona	7	9	7	7

The effect of revision of assessment is thus shown:—

	Hingunghat.	Pohona.
	Villages.	Villages.
Jummahs enhanced in	41	18
Ditto	5	12
Ditto	111	73

The net reduction being in Hingunghat 3,566, or 5½ per cent; in Pohona 1,283, or 2⅞ths per cent.

170. Mr. Bernard then goes on to explain that "in pergunnah Hingunghat, relief has been given chiefly to rich fertile villages; in Pohona to poor villages. Though these two results are relatively inharmonious, yet I believe they are in accordance with the circumstances of each case. By the last four assessments much relief has been given to the richer villages of Pohona, and scarcely any to the richer villages of Hingunghat.

Result obtained.

"The relief given in Hingunghat is in accordance with the thesis set forth in several memoranda by the Secretary on special duty, that the usual fault of summary assessments is to assess rich lands too high and poor lands too low, and that an intelligent revision usually results in lowering the revenue of rich villages and raising the jumma of poor ones. I did not lose sight of this deduction from Captain Mackenzie's long experience, but I did not find that it fell in precisely with the circumstances of the Pohona pergunnah. On comparing the villages of the 2nd chuk with those of the 1st, it seemed to me that, in proportion to their productive powers, poor lands had to pay more than rich lands.

"That this is the case must sometimes strike a settlement officer in deducing the assessments from estimates of the produce. When the same crops are grown in different kinds of soil, the cost of ploughing, sowing, &c., does not vary with the soil, but the out-turn of the crop does. The cultivator's profits, the landlord's rent, and the State demand, all ought to vary directly with the proportion of out-turn to the cost of husbandry. "

"Agriculturists themselves appreciate the difference between the productive powers of good and bad lands most clearly. And the following extract from a prize essay on land-valuing, read last December before the Royal Agricultural Society by a professional Land Surveyor of 39 years' standing, would show that in Europe, it is not uncommon for poor lands to be over-valued in proportion to their productive powers.

"But if farmers generally under-rate the difference between poor land and really good land, it is beyond the power of the land-valuer to alter their views. Still such discrepancy does exist, and it should be his object rather to correct than to exaggerate it, and there can be no doubt that, without care, there is great danger of valuing the best soils considerably below their real value.

"On the other hand I believe Mr. MacGeorge was right in relieving the rich villages of Hingunghat. In that pergunnah, the difference between existing assessment on rich and on poor lands is far wider than in Pohona. I merely quote the opinion of Mr. Tuckett to show that circumstances are not always the same. In one country or in one pergunnah, poor land may be over-assessed in proportion to rich; in another country or pergunnah, rich lands may be over-assessed and poor lands under-valued."

171. These assessments were sanctioned in October 1863, and announced to the people in the same month. No alteration or revision has since taken place, save in one trifling case, where, in the village of Nundoree, the jumma that had been revised to Rs. 460 was subsequently reduced from that sum to Rs. 250.

Revised assessment sanctioned and announced.

CHAPTER XI.

HUZOOR TEHSEEL; PERGUNNAHS NACHENGAON AND UNDOREE.

Pergunnahs Nachengaon and Undoree.

Position of the pergunnahs.

172. These two pergunnahs lying side by side below the lowest spurs of the Sautpoorah hills, in the valley of the Wurdah, on the frontier of the Wurdah district, have many physical features in common. It was accordingly determined to assess them in one block as one pergunnah. Mr. MacGeorge inspected the villages of the Nachengaon pergunnah, and submitted proposals for its assessment. These assessments were subsequently revised by Mr. Bernard. The Undooree pergunnah was inspected, and the revised assessments framed by Mr. Bernard.

Advantageous position of Nachengaon.

173. The Nachengaon pergunnah being in the extreme west of the district, and being traversed throughout its whole length by the Southern Deccan Road and the line of railway, possesses peculiar advantages. Undoree is not equally fortunate, but some benefit will doubtless accrue to the pergunnah from the new road which, connecting the great cotton marts of Hingunghat with the Kowtah station, passes through the length of the pergunnah. Nachengaon boasts of two towns which may be considered commercial marts of importance, Nachengaon and Deolee:—Nachengaon is close to the railway station on the bank of the Wurdah, and is the frontier town of the Central Provinces; Deolee is a well known cotton mart, and is rivalling Hingunghat. Undoree, which is situated between these two great markets, is dependent on them for its supplies, and possesses no town deserving of notice.

Statistic of the pergunnahs.

174. The agricultural staples of Nachengaon are millet and cotton. The poppy and other garden crops are grown in the irrigated lands of the pergunnah. The northern part of Undoree produces principally cotton and millet; in the south and richer villages, the crops alternate with wheat. The following statistics show the capability of the pergunnahs. There are in Nachengaon 30 estates, with an average area of nearly 3 square miles, or 13,324½ acres to each estate, the total area of the pergunnah being 270 square miles, or 173,276 acres; 40 of these estates have no village site, and are what are called "*dakhilees*" or "*Muzrahs*," that is, are now included in some parent village hard by. In Undoree the number of estates is 100 exactly, the average area to each estate being 1½ square miles, or 1,008 acres, the total area of the pergunnah in miles and acres being 159 and 1,00,504 respectively. Of the area thus shown, 16 villages representing 24,618 acres of land are held revenue-free in Nachengaon, the villages so held being chiefly Mokassa estates of the Janojee Rajah of Deor, adopted son of the

widows of the late ruler. In Undoree, the number of villages held revenue-free is four only, aggregating 5,962 acres. The total cultivated area in the pergunnahs of Nachengaon and Undoree is 117,124 and 82,622 acres respectively, or, in other words *of the total area*, 67½ per cent. of land is under the plough in Nachengaon; in Undoree 82 per cent. The fallow land aggregates in Nachengaon 38,529 acres, or 32¾ per cent. on the cultivated area. In Undoree, it amounts to but 11,537 acres, or 14 per cent. on the area cultivated. The waste land, utterly unculturable and only fit for grazing cattle is returned at 14,825 in Nachengaon and 5,152 in Undoree, or 9 and 5 per cent. of the total area of the two pergunnahs respectively, but this return Mr. Bernard believes to be excessive.

Proportions of different sorts of soil.

175. The returns of the classes of soil for the two pergunnahs are as follows:—

	First Class.	Second Class.	Third Class.	Fourth Class.
Nachengaon	59,871	41,547	12,727	1,423
Undoree	9,884	45,199	25,688	1,737

In this return is to be remarked this striking difference that, whereas in Nachengaon 50 per cent. of the cultivated area is returned as black soil, in Undoree but 10 per cent. is shown as of this superior description. This difference Mr. Bernard attributes not to any actual difference between the soils of the two pergunnahs, but to the different methods of discrimination adopted by the parties charged with the measurement. Nachengaon was measured by Mr. Sinclair, Undoree by Syed Awlad Hussein, and although the opposite principles on which these two officers went preclude the adoption of similar soil rates in the two pergunnahs, still all the villages of one pergunnah having been measured by the same party in one season, the returns of soils are made on the same principle for either pergunnah, and there is thus no reason why soil rates should not ensure the working out of equable assessments.

Resources of the pergunnahs.

176. The following further statistics as showing the resources of the pergunnah, on a knowledge of which these assessments were based, may be of interest. The plough return showed in Nachengaon one yoke of oxen to every 10 acres of cultivation; in Undoree one yoke to every 13¼ acres. The population was found to be 132 and 140 souls to a square mile in Nachengaon and Undoree respectively. In Nachengaon the agriculturists are to the non-agriculturists as 2 is to 3; in Undoree as 9 to 10. The cultivating castes, as in the neighbouring pergunnahs, are Koombees, Telees, and Malees. The Malees, however, abound in Nachengaon, and cultivate many irrigated plots of lands. Komtees,

Koshtees, and Sonars are sometimes found cultivating. The slopes of the Sautpoorahs on the north of the pergunnahs bring with them, of course, Gonds and jungle.

177. Well irrigation is more practised and better understood in Nachengaon pergunnah than in any part of the Wurdah district, one or two villages of Anjee only excepted. The number of wells in use in this pergunnah is 858 in Undoree the number is but 312. The causes which up to the present have militated against the extension of irrigation in the district have been explained in Chapter IV, and these reasons apply with particular force to this part of the district.

Irrigation.

178. It will be seen from the above details that Nachengaon and Undoree rank high among the pergunnahs of the district, and have advantages over the neighbouring pergunnahs. With the statistics before him, and after having made a thorough inspection of the villages, Mr. MacGeorge proceeded to divide the Nachengaon pergunnah into three chuks or groups for assessment in the following manner:—

Division of the Nachengaon pergunnah into chucks.

Chuk I comprised the villages in the basin of the Jasooda and Asoda streams and the villages of the Wurdah basin. Where the Wurdah takes a bend, however, the village lands are much cut up by the action of the water, and the best lands were found not immediately overhanging the river, but at a distance of three or four miles from its banks.

Chuk II contained the river villages which had deteriorated in the manner above described, and villages which, though good, did not quite come up to the standard required for Chuk I, whilst Chuk III comprised the lands reached by the spurs of the Sautpoorahs, and the valley villages in which the Sautpoorah strata re-appear above the surface in the form of rocky hills. These sub-divisions, it will be seen, entirely followed the physical features of the country.

179. Undoree was divided into two chuks only, and they were framed on exactly the same principle as that above alluded to. Chuk I, including all the villages in the basin of the Wurdah and Asoda; Chuk II, the high lands on the Khangaon ridge and slopes of the Sautpoorah.

Chuks of Undoree.

180. The fiscal history of the Pergunnahs is shown in the following statement—

Their fiscal history.

	Nachengaon.	Undoree.
	Nagpore Rs.	Nagpore Rs.
Nana Sahib's settlement from Fusly 1242-1244, or A. D. 1832-1834	58,873	46,733
Ghulam Allee's settlement from Fusly 1248-50, or A. D. 1838-40	55,794	44,952
Dajee Sahib's ditto Fusly 1260-62, or A. D. 1850-52	65,702	57,751
	Govt. Rs.	Govt. Rs.
Average of two British Settlements	59,772	46,571
Existing Jumma Revenue	59,226	46,364

By this it will be shown that the Government demand as it stood at the time of the revision of the settlement was actually higher than that payable under the Mahratta Government. But Mr. Bernard explains that the taxes on fields, on ploughs, and on trees, never represented the full taxation that a man had to pay, and that the agriculturist was liable to poll tax, transit duties, and innumerable other troublesome cesses. Moreover the extension of cultivating during late years has been great and rapid. The fall of existing jummas and declared rent-roll which accounts in some degree for the comparatively high assessment on the Khalsa villages of the pergunnah, was found to be on cultivation on assessable area.

Comparison of the Revenue.

Incidence of the revenue.

	Revenue.	Revenue.	Revenue.	Rent-Roll.
	A. P.	A. P.	A. P.	A. P.
Nachengaon	9 2	10 7	6 11	9 1
Undoree	8 9	11 7	7 2	9 0

181. As a basis of assessment, Mr. Bernard did not place any reliance on these rent-roll returns. In paragraph 168, his opinion that the declared rent-rolls afford no safe data for deduction of average rent has already been cited. In submitting the proposed assessments for Nachengaon, he, in paragraph 34 of his letter No. 67, dated 31st July 1863, to the Commissioner, Nagpoor division, adhered to the opinion referred to above, and absolving the landholders as a body of any deliberate intention of falsifying the village rent-rolls, he attributed the unreliable state of this record to the custom that had come down to them from their forefathers, of entering rents at the lowest possible figure, and of omitting to show in their rent-roll any manorial perquisites whatever. It became necessary then to inspect the rent-rolls in detail, in the hope of being able to deduce average rent-rates therefrom. But as the rents were found to be fixed most unaccountably and capriciously, the examination of these papers did not afford much instruction or assistance. The state of the rents of the "Khalsa" or revenue-paying villages being unsonnd, it was impossible for the Mokasdars to regulate their rents very satisfactorily, as they could not mete out to their tenants harsher measures than the tenants of other villages without running the risk of having their lands left tenantless. Thus from the Mokasa rent-rolls much assistance could not be expected. Mr. Bernard had thus to adopt arbitrary rent-rates for each group of villages. These rent-rates were always borne out by the existing rents of some fields, but they were not average rent-rates deduced from all existing rents in all villages of the group. These rent-rates too were much higher than the rate which the declared rent-rolls showed, but the reason for adopting these high rates was not so much, Mr. Bernard explained, from any

Untrustworthiness of rent-roll returns.

unbelief in declared rent-rolls as from a conviction that existing rents are not so high as they ought to be, and as they very soon will be. The reasons for arriving at this conclusion have already been fully discussed and need not be recapitulated here.

182. The rates assumed are shown in the accompanying tables:—

IN NACHENGAON.

	1st Kalee.			2nd Kalee.			Morund.			Khurdee.			Raitharee.			Burdee.		
Chuk I.	1	12	0	1	6	0	1	4	0	1	0	0	0	8	0	0	8	0
„ II.	1	10	0	1	4	0	1	0	0	0	12	0	0	8	0	0	8	0
„ III.	1	8	0	1	0	0	0	12	0	0	8	0	0	6	0	0	6	0

IN UNDOREE.

	1st Kalee.			2nd Kalee.			Morund.			Khurdee.			Raitharee.			Burdee.		
Chuk I.	1	8	0	1	8	0	1	0	0	0	12	0	0	12	0	0	4	0
„ II.	1	4	0	1	4	0	0	15	0	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	4	0

And taking 60 per cent. of the rent as the State demand, those rent-rates gave as revenue rates—

IN NACHENGAON.

	1st Kalee.			2nd Kalee.			Morund.			Khurdee.			Raitharee.			Burdee.		
Chuk I.	1	0	9	0	13	3	0	12	0	0	9	7	0	4	10	0	4	10
„ II.	0	15	7	0	13	3	0	9	7	0	7	7	0	4	10	0	4	10
„ III.	0	14	0	0	9	7	0	7	7	0	4	10	0	3	7	0	3	7

IN UNDOREE.

	1st Kalee.			2nd Kalee.			Mornd.			Khurdee			Raithuree.			Burdee.		
Chuk I.	0	14	4	0	14	4	0	9	7	0	7	7	0	7	7	0	2	5
„ II.	0	12	0	0	12	0	0	9	0	0	6	0	0	6	0	0	2	5

These rates having been multiplied into the cultivated area of each village and an assumed rent worked out, it remained to be considered how far they applied to each village, and to attach an arithmetical value to all qualifying circumstances. The remarks in the general statement show how the process of adaptation was gone through for each village. To assist him and steady his conclusions, the settlement officer had a plough jumma, the fiscal history of the village as told in its ancient jummas, and its administrative history as told in the varying circumstances of its holders. Mr. Bernard in making the assessments was also guided by the opinion of the Tehseedar, the Canoongoe and other old pergunnah servants possessed of long experience in the pergunnah, and great local knowledge.

Manner of working out the assessments.

183. The result of the working out of these assessments is shown in the annexed statement, in which the assumed and proposed revenue and the declared and existing rents are compared in Khalsa villages only.

Pergunnahs.		Nikasee.		Jumma.	
		Declared.	Assumed.	Existing.	Proposed.
Nachengaon.	Chuk I.	39,409	57,280	33,879	34,368
	„ II.	18,008	26,405	15,696	15,844
	„ III.	11,987	16,485	9,641	9,891
	Total ...	68,398	1,00,170	59,216	60,103
Undoree.	Chuk I.	21,189	29,841	18,252	17,905
	„ II.	28,740	41,091	25,396	24,655
	Total ...	49,928	70,932	43,651	42,560

Results.

The revised revenue gave an enhancement of Rs. 887 in Nachengaon. In Undoree, the revision resulted in a reduction of Rs. 1,091, or 1½ and 2½ per cent. on the existing jummas of both respectively. Their distribution in simple Khalsa villages is shown below :—

	Enhanced.	Maintained.	Reduced.
Nachengaon ...	57	17	61
Undoree ...	13	16	67

CHAPTER XII.

PERGUNNAHS ANJEE, POWNAR, AND BAILA.

184. The last pergunnahs assessed were those of Anjee, Pownar, and Baila. They form, as will be seen from the sketch map, the northern frontier of the district, and lie under the spurs of the Sautpoorahs which here run east and west in the direction of Nagpore. The north-western corner of Anjee has some river frontage. Baila, on the other hand, is in the extreme north-eastern corner, and lies in the angle formed by the two low ranges of hills, which, as already described, form the north and east boundaries of the district. Thus it will be seen that these pergunnahs have many features in common, and that they were well suited to be grouped together in one block for assessment.

Position of these pergunnahs.

185. The Bombay road and the Nagpore extension of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway pass through Baila and Pownar. Anjee is well off the line of railway, but a new cotton road connects the market town of Arwee, famed for its cotton, with the railway station at Kowtah. In Pownar are situated remains of what must have been once a fine old Hindoo city, but it can boast of no place of importance, save Wurdah, the new civil station and head quarters of the district, which likely, as it is soon to become the station to which the cotton of Hingunghat will be carried for export, will doubtless some day be a place of importance. Sindee, a large town and a railway station, is the chief place in Baila. Baila and Ashtee are old pergunnah head-quarter-towns, which still retain some part of their former pretensions.

Their advantages.

186. The staple products of Anjee and Pownar are cotton and millet. Wheat is the staple of Baila, there being more wheat grown in this pergunnah than in any part of the district, excepting a portion of the talooka of Mandgaon situated south of Baila.

Staple products.

187. Mr. MacGeorge inspected the Anjee pergunnah, and submitted his proposals to Mr. Bernard for approval. Mr. Bernard inspected and framed the assessments of pergunnahs Pownar and Baila.

Inspections of settlement officers.

188. The villages of these pergunnahs were grouped in chuks for assessment in the following manner. In the Anjee pergunnah, the 1st northern or Arwee chuck, included 102 villages, situated in the basin of the Wurdah, where the belt of plain between the river and the hills is the narrowest. Mr. Bernard found the soil of this part of the pergunnah to be very fertile; the population is, he says, fairly thick, and the country assimilates in appearance more with pergunnah Ashtee of the Nagpore division than with any pergunnah

The Anjee pergunnah chuks or groups.

of the Wurdah district. The 2nd chuk of Anjee contained 59 villages lying eastward, just where the valley begins to widen and the Sautpoorahs recede from the river. The lands in this chuk are much the same as average lands in other pergunnahs of the Wurdah valley. The 3rd chuk in this pergunnah contained 48 estates, all more or less mountainous and stony, situated amongst the spurs of the Sautpoorahs.

The Pownar pergunnah chuks or groups.

189. The Pownar pergunnah was divided into two chuks. The 1st chuk included the villages lying in the basin of the Dhamme and Wunnah, and the 2nd chuk the villages in the high lands which rise between the valley of the Dhamme on the east and the valley of the Usoda in the west.

The Baila pergunnah chuks or groups.

190. The Baila pergunnah was likewise divided into two chuks; the 1st or Baila chuk including 89 villages, and the 2nd or Asola Chuck comprising 66 villages. This pergunnah is so cut up in all directions by hills and spurs of hills, that Mr. Bernard was obliged to divide it into upland and lowland villages. This classification was necessitated by the configuration of the country, and will be well understood by any one who has been through the pergunnah.

Revision of assessments.

191. The results of the revision of assessments in these three pergunnahs are shown below :—

Pergunnahs.	Existing Revenue.	Revised Revenue.	Difference.	
			Increase.	Decrease.
Anjee	77,902	76,195	...	907
Pownar	54,243	54,045	...	198
Baila	47,847	49,550	1,703	...
Total ...	1,79,992	1,80,590	1,703	1,105

The above shows a reduction of Rs. 907, or 1 and $\frac{1}{8}$th per cent. on the existing jumma of Anjee, and Rs. 198, or $\frac{3}{8}$ths per cent. on that of Pownar, whilst in Baila the increase is Rs. 1,703, or $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the existing jumma, thus giving a net increase of $\frac{5}{6}$ths per cent. on the aggregate of the existing revenue of the three pergunnahs.

Results.

192. In the general statements of assessments, forming part of the Appendix to this report, the results of the assessments of the district are shown in detail for each village, it is therefore not necessary here to do more than to state that the general result gives a reduction of from 9 to 20 per cent. on the old Mahratta assessments, which were admittedly heavy, and under which a landholder certainly never realized 50 per cent. on the collection.

CHAPTER XIII.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ASSESSMENTS, DETAILS, AND RESULTS.

Revised assessments generally approved of.

193. The revised assessments were announced to the landholders by Mr. Bernard in October 1863. The result of these announcements was general satisfaction. Any landholder who was dissatisfied with the amount assessed on his estate, or who considered that it would not pay him to continue holding on the terms fixed by the settlement officer, was at liberty to refuse to accept the assessment, and to throw up his village, but the revisions were acknowledged to be so fair and equable, that out of the 988 Wurdah landholders, only one declined to engage. This was the old Brahmin of the Chitnawees family who holds Nundoree, a considerable village, situated on the southern Deccan Road : but the lands around Nundoree are undoubtedly inferior, and further enquiry showed that the Chitnawees had some ground for grievance, and a slight reduction in his favor was immediately made, which resulted in the Wurdah landholders being entirely quite unanimous in their approval of the revised assessments.

Khewut operations commenced.

194. When the landholders had had a short time to think over and discuss the new Government demand now for the first time fixed for 30 years, the subordinate employés of the Settlement Department commenced the many important proceedings which follow the assessment, and which, I believe, are generally known by the comprehensive term of "Khewut operations."

Position and liability of landhorders.

195. Up to this point, the attention of the Settlement Department had been confined to determining the general position of the landholder, and to settling the annual land tax to be paid by him on his property.

Record of rights and adjustment of rents.

196. But now attention was to be given to the recording of any other rights in detail which might be found to exist, and to the adjustment of rents. The two operations went hand in hand. Indeed the two proceedings are inseparable. The payment to be made by a cultivator for his field depended almost entirely on the nature of the rights possessed by him, which according to its strength or weakness would regulate and curtail the payments.

Tenant right classifications and investigations.

197. In bestowing proprietary right, Government had taken care to ensure that whatever co-ordinate or subordinate rights might virtually exist should be preserved, although proprietary right had been so far conferred conditionally, that is to say, subject to the enquiry into rights of occupancy of the cultivators. The investigations

into these rights were now commenced. Some assistance was afforded by the entries made by the measurement parties whilst collecting the village statistics before referred to. In accordance with the instructions of Mr. Ellis, the following classification of cultivators was adopted (I) "Kadeemee," *i. e.*, a cultivator who had been in occupation more than 12 years; (II) "Judeed," one who had held less than 12 years; (III) "Khoodkhast," the resident cultivator; (IV) "Pykhast," the non-resident; (V) a Pykhast cultivator, who had cultivated more than 20 years, was described as "Pykhast Kadeem," one who had held less than that period as a "Pykhast Judeed," and it was explained at the time that it would remain for after consideration what rights would be conferred on each class of cultivators. These instructions were issued in 1858, prior to the passing of the rent-law, namely Act X of 1859, and the classification was subsequently modified. When the proclamation already referred to in Chapter VIII was issued, Act X of 1859 had been published, and in the anticipation of the extension of the Act to these Provinces, the status of the cultivators was so fixed in the proclamation as to accord with the provisions of that Act. Thus Clause 14 announced that "uninterrupted possession for 12 years by a resident cultivator '(Khoodkhast)' has been held to constitute a 'Kudeem' or hereditary holding or occupancy. Possession for a less period has been entered as a "Judeed" constituting the holder a tenant-at-will. When the Malgoozars are in the habit of renewing engagements with their Assamees annually, a mere tenant-at-will is liable to be ousted at the will of any landlord who may consider himself entitled to enhanced rates, whether with or without good and sufficient reason for such enhancement. When a resident cultivator's occupancy then extends over 12 years, his holding will be secured to him as long as he meets his engagements, and every protection will be afforded against undue exaction. When a landlord may consider himself entitled to a higher rent, he will in such case be made to establish his proof to that effect before the revenue authorities, and without such proof no such enhancement will be allowed. A Malgoozar will be entitled to enhanced rents in proportion as the value of each holding is improved by the industry of the occupant, but the increase must be in proportion, and on the same principle, though in a less degree, as the Malgoozar's assessment, regulated by the general capabilities of the estate."

Classes of cultivators recognized by Mr. Ellis.

198. Subsequent enquiries resulted however in the division of the cultivators into three distinct classes, one of these classes recently underwent a further sub-division which would raise the number to four, but inasmuch as this sub-division is only temporary, and will soon cease to exist, destined as it is to be absorbed into the next grade below; it may be more convenient to consider the cultivators as belonging to three great classes here placed according to their rank—

Three classes finally adopted.

I.—Proprietors of their holdings, "Malik Mukboozah."

II.—Tenants with right of occupancy, "Assamee Mouroosee;" and

III.—Tenants-at-will, "Assameeghair Mouroosee."

199. The settlement found all classes of cultivators in the position of tenants. In the same way the landholders were but *farmers* when the country was annexed. The British Government made these farmers proprietors of their estates. Enquiry showed that in nearly every estate there existed a class of cultivators, then only tenants, who for particular reasons were deserving of special consideration, who *quoad* their fields or holdings, possessed as good a title to proprietary right as that which had secured for the landholders the same privilege in their estates. These cultivators were accordingly taken out of the category of tenants altogether, and raised to the rank of proprietors of their holdings, and they form the first and most important class of the cultivators of the Wurdah district. Cultivators of this description became the proprietors of a field or a circle of fields, which formed a small independent property within the estate held by the landholder in whose name the village stood. These cultivators who were technically called in the vernacular "Malik Mukboozahs," were at liberty to dispose of the whole or any portion of their holding in the same manner that the landholder could dispose of his estate, from which the patch held by the Malik Mukboozah was thus virtually excluded: they were not liable to the landholder for any rent on account of their fields. The fair share of the Government revenue payable by them was assessed after due consideration of all attendant circumstances by the Settlement Department. This amount was not, however, paid into the Government treasury direct by the "Malik Mukboozah," but was collected from him by the landholders, to whom in consideration of the trouble and expense of collection, the Malik Mukboozah paid a small sum called "Huq-ool-tehseel," calculated at 5 per cent. on the revenue of the holding. In the same manner he also paid in, through the proprietor of the estate, the usual cesses. Save then in the manner in which he pays in the Government revenue, the position of the Malik Mukboozah resembles on a small scale that of the wealthy landholder, the proprietor of an "estate;" and thus every one of the investigations of claims of cultivators to be made Malik Mukboozahs resembled in like manner on a small scale, the proprietary right cases (claims to villages,) already described in Chapter VIII. In fact, each of these claims was for the possession of a small holding, consisting of a few fields, in proportion quite as important to the holder as the large estate or village was to the wealthy landholder, and the principles and procedure followed in deciding these miniature cases much resembled that referred to in Chapter VIII. The value of the claim of the cultivator to be raised to this highly advantageous position varied in an inverse ratio according to the position and rights of the landholder. The Malik Mukboozah paid his share of the Government revenue it is true, but from him the landholder could levy no rent.

Same tenants under peculiar circumstances made proprietors of their holdings.

Their position.

Malik Mukboozah a small independant landholder.

In a village, the whole of the cultivators of which were Malik Mukboozahs, the landholder would be in the position of Lumberdar,

in Hindustan, that is, at the head of a community of peasant proprietors. He would have his own peculium or "seer" holding, and from the rest he would only collect the Government revenue, and the huq-ool-tchseel thrown in to cover the trouble of the collection.

Malik Mukboozah claims very diverse.

200. Thus then when the landholder's rights founded on long possession and other favorable circumstances, were strong, it would rarely happen that cultivators would be found entitled to such a position as that above described. The claim of the one to collect and enjoy the rent, and the right of the other to be exempt from the payment, had to be most carefully weighed. The circumstances which during these enquiries presented themselves tending to strengthen the claim of the cultivator to admission into this class, were very diverse, and it was difficult to lay down a general rule for their decision.

Principles adopted in decision of these cases.

201. One of the principles followed in deciding these claims was, that no length of occupancy as a mere cultivator *per se* conferred a right to the position of Malik Mukboozah. Long possession undoubtedly had weight in the absence of fixed and stronger claims on the side of the landholder, who was of course the defendant in every claim made by a cultivator to be declared proprietor of his holding. But the landholders of Wurdah are in a close or very old standing, and it was seldom that a cultivator who had not some other circumstances in his favor could make head against the landholder with a claim based only on long cultivation.

Various classes of cultivators entitled to the position.

202. The persons on whom proprietary right in their holdings were conferred, consisted often of members of the family of the proprietors of the estates. Men, however, often came forward who from their descent from the original founder of the village had some sort of a claim to admission to a share. It was however generally found that persons of this description, when they did not actually enjoy part of the profits, received one or more fields, rent-free, in commutation of their shares. When it was clearly established that they had long held on these terms, and had been shut out from partnership, cultivators of this class were made Malik Mukboozahs. The same procedure was observed in dealing with relations of the proprietors who held lands at favorable and fixed rates.

Members of the landholders' family holding fields at low rates in commutation of shares.

Muccaddums or ancestral right holders.

203. Yet another very large class were the "Muccuddums," representatives of the families who originally founded the village, but who under the Mahratta government had lost for a time their position and their estates. These men invariably claimed proprietary right in the whole estate. Where the title of the incumbent was not too strong, and when the Muccaddum had been only for a short time out of possession, then ancestral right holders were re-instated. But as the chapter on proprietary right has shown, the prescriptive title of the incumbents in possession often carried the day. Where the Muccaddum

lost his case, an order was generally recorded that in consideration of his former connection with the village, the claimant should be made proprietor of the holding he actually cultivated. This was a fair concession in favor of the Muccaddum whose position was always respected in the village. It was admitted even by the landholders to be just, and gave considerable satisfaction in the district. The number of Malik Mukboozahs so created amounts to 149,202.

Cultivators of long standing, who had expended capital on their fields, declared proprietors of their holdings.

204. The last and most numerous class consisted of those cultivators of long standing who had exercised some proprietary right, such as transferring their holdings or sinking more than an ordinary amount of capital in the improvement of their fields. The value of the title thus acquired varied, as has already been explained, according to the title of the landholder within the boundaries of whose estate the cultivator's fields were situated. The circumstances were of course different in every single estate in the district, and each case was decided on its merits. The number of cultivators declared proprietors of their holdings under this heading amounts to 15,644.

Government revenue assessed on the holdings of Malik Mukboozahs.

205. These cultivators having been declared proprietors, the quota of land revenue had to be assessed on all their holdings. In doing this, the settlement officer or his assistant was guided by the assessment rates on soils taken by the settlement officer in assessing the village. The quality of the soil was considered, the rents paid by the holders of the adjoining fields were ascertained, and a sum fixed on very much the same principles as those by which the settlement officer had been guided in making the assessments of the village. As these Malik Mukboozahs generally held some of the best land of the village, the revenue assessed on their fields was rather above the average of the revenue rate on the cultivated area of the estate.

A ryotwar settlement made.

206. A ryotwar settlement for a term of 30 years was in fact made with each Malik Mukboozah of the most substantial cultivators in the Wurdah district.

Other exceptional cases of cultivators.

207. But during the course of the investigations, some rather peculiar cases of cultivators entitled to be declared Malik Mukboozahs presented themselves, in which a departure from the rule of assessment given above became necessary.

These cases described.

208. Whilst superintending the adjustment of rents in the Anjee pergunnah, Mr. Bernard came upon a class of cultivators, usually Mallees or Telees by caste, who had held small plots of irrigated land for generations, and who absolutely owned the trees and wells in those plots, and who had in many cases paid the same rent for a long period of years. These rents were always high rents, and were very much above the ordinary rent rates of the village. Cases also came to Mr. Bernard's notice in which such cultivators had sold or mortgaged their wells, their groves

or their plots, and such transactions had, he found, been respected by the Malgoozars and acknowledged by the Mahratta and the British courts of justice. Some few cases also came to his knowledge in which the rents paid for such plots had been virtually unchanged for a long period of years.

From this it was argued that cultivators who had exercised such plenary rights of the property over their holdings must, under the Settlement Code, be recorded as proprietors of their holdings. If so recorded, then the revenue on their holdings would be limited to the village jumma rate "plus" huq-ool-tehseel at from 10 to 20 per cent. on the jumma sum paid by them. But Mr. Bernard held that such an assessment of those which were usually the best holdings of the village would not be fair to the superior proprietor whose village had been settled at half assets. For these high rents of irrigated plots often formed a very considerable part of the assets (rents) of a village, and if, instead of those rents, a jumma at the ordinary village revenue rate were to be assessed on such holdings, then the Government demand ought to be proportionally reduced.

Mr. Bernard cited the following instance in Mouzah Arvee of the Anjee pergunnah. Here the cultivated area is 456 acres, the declared rent Rs. 1,919, and the revised revenue Rs. 1,500. Some of the gardens round Arvee pay rent at the rate of from Rs. 40 to 50 on the acre, and the rent paid by these irrigated plots is about $\frac{4}{5}$ths of the whole assets of Arvee. These gardens are, for the most part, held by Mallees whose ancestors dug or bought the wells, and these Mallees have held the plots for generations at high rents varying but very little from year to year; obviously, if these plots were assessed at Rs. 3-7-0,* the revenue rate of the village, the assets (rents) of Arvee would be considerably reduced, the revised jumma must also be reduced, and the State would lose a large portion of its just dues.

* The revenue rate of the chuck is As. 15.

But this was not the only ground on which Mr. Bernard advocated a departure from the mode which the Code prescribed for the assessment of such holdings. He argued that the rights of property had accrued to and were recognized in such cultivators, because they had held the lands for many years at high and often unvarying rents, and because they had dug or bought wells in their holdings. But it was to be borne in mind that the Malgoozar (now recognized as proprietor) or his predecessors, had conceded to these tenants or their ancestors the right to sink wells. or had made over to such tenants "lawaris" wells (wells without owners), which by custom belong to the Malgoozar, on condition that they (the tenants) should pay to the Malgoozar high rents, which might or might not vary from year to year. The landlord's prescriptive right to high rents, therefore, was quite as ancient and quite as strong as the tenant's prescription, which according to the Settlement Code gave him the right of proprietor in his holding (Malik Mukboozah).

In order to meet the claims of this twofold prescription, Mr. Bernard proposed that tenants such as described above should be

recorded as proprietors of their holdings, but that the assessments of their holdings should be fixed with reference to the high and often unvarying rents they had paid for the 10 or 12 years immediately preceding the settlement.

The weight of the reasons adduced above was admitted by the Chief Commissioner, and it was ruled that the revenue on such holdings ought certainly to be assessed with some regard to the rents formerly paid by those holdings for the two following reasons :—

1*stly*.—The revenue rate of a village is not always, nor indeed is it generally, the real revenue rate payable by the best fields in that village. It is arrived at by placing the best and worst land for purposes of calculation in one category. Depth of soil, proximity to habitations and roads, nearness of water-bearing strata, all contribute, with unusual force, in a country so diversified as the Central Provinces, to make the producing or paying power, and the Government revenue of fields in the same village differ widely. The "certain stated jumma" mentioned in paragraph 15 of page 7 of the Code may therefore be considerably in excess of the jumma which a Malik Mukboozah's holding would pay, if assessed merely at what, in settlement phraseology, is called "the revenue rate" of his village. Experience is usually the best test of the paying power of a field, and therefore of the revenue of a field. In assessing then the Government demad on a Malik Mukboozah's field, regard must certainly be had to the rents it formerly paid.

2*ndly*.—The superior proprietor is certainly entitled by perscription to a high rate of payment, and to a certain amount of gain on fields held by tenants, such as are alluded to in this paper. But in order to guard the rights of such tenants, it is found necessary to record them as proprietors of their holdings; similarly, in order to guard the rights of the proprietor, the quondom Malgoozar, it is necessary to allow him a certain "Malikana" on the revenue paid by the inferior proprietors.

The immediate and prospective effect of the Government ruling.

209. This ruling improved the status and protected the interests of many deserving cultivators, the owners of the irrigated plots in the Anjee pergunnah and Nachengaon; and it is hoped that their advantageous position will encourage them to extend considerably the irrigated area in those pergunnahs.

Tenants with rights of occupancy.

210. The cultivators next in rank are the *tenants with rights of occupancy*. Of them it is not necessary to say much more than what their position and rights are, as defined and protected by Act X of 1859, and Act XIV of 1863, for these Acts have now been formally extended to these provinces. In fact, even before the extension of these Acts, their principles were duly observed during the preliminary operations. At Khewut, every man who could establish 12 years' continuous possession, was entered as a tenant with right of occupancy. Where the fact of possession was disputed, regular judicial enquiry was made and an order recorded. On the result of this enquiry, as will be seen hereafter, depended much the rent which the cultivator had to pay.

211. But subsequently this class was further divided. The probable amendment of Act X of 1859, by the principle of which the Settlement Department had been guided in recording cultivators as tenants with right of occupancy, rendered a complete re-investigation and classification necessary. It was anticipated that the law would be so amended as to raise the qualification required to entitle the cultivators to protection. The 12 years' rule was to be done away with, and simple possession was now to be considered to establish a right to occupancy. But so long as these Acts remained in force, its provisions were obligatory on our officers, and it was necessary to recognize the right conferred thereby. The 12 years' cultivators then were to be entered as tenants with right of occupancy, but the right was declared only to be conditional and subject to any modification of the Act to which it owed its existence. The tenants belonging to this sub-division may possibly fall to the status of tenants at will, or continue as occupancy tenants, according as Act X of 1859 shall remain unchanged, or shall be altered.

Sub-division of this class.

Tenants with a conditional right of occupancy,

212. The other sub-division of this class were *those tenants whose rights of occupancy were declared to be absolute.* To obtain a position in this class, it was laid down that the circumstances of the tenant's possession must have fulfilled certain conditions and the cultivators been grouped in the following six classes :—

Tenants whose right of occupancy have been declared absolute,

I.—Those whose possession had carried with it something of an hereditary character.

II.—Those who had expended such capital on their fields as to give them some special title to occupancy right.

III.—Those who were related to present or former proprietors, and whose occupancy right might be considered to some extent as a substitute for a share in the proprietary right.

IV.—Cultivators belonging to new villages who had held their fields since the village was founded, or since their lands had been reclaimed from the jungle.

V.—Those who had held their fields from a date antecedent to the proprietor's connection with the village as landlord.

In addition to the conditions above cited, it was required that cultivators of the above classes, in order to entitle them to an absolute right of occupancy, should have held their fields for 12 or nearly 12 years. The sixth and last class consisted of

VI.—Those whose claims to occupancy right rested on bare possession of 25 years or upwards.

It was however laid down that the definition of this class was to be regarded only as a general rule, which might be subject under special circumstances to modification, and indeed the definition was subsequently modified. It was decided that possession even for 25

years unless it partook of an hereditary character, or fulfilled one of the conditions cited in classes I to V, was not to be considered to constitute a right of occupancy, and an amendment was made which confined class VI to "ryots" cultivating lands which have descended to them by inheritance. To establish, under this rule, occupancy right, the land must have descended by inheritance to the occupant. This, however, did not affect, to any appreciable extent, former enquiries, for, as a matter of fact, there was hardly a cultivator of 20 years' standing who had not inherited, and thus possessed the qualification necessary to admit him to this class. Enquiries into these cases were made carefully. The statement of both sides, landlord and tenant, being recorded in all cases in which the right of possession was contested, and a judicial proceeding and order being the result of the investigations. A separate list was made out in which the names of all the tenants found to possess absolute right of occupancy were recorded. The landholder signed this list as an admission of its correctness, and the position of the cultivator was secured against any future change in the law, by the insertion of a clause in the village administration paper by which the landholder bound himself and his heirs to acknowledge and respect the status of all cultivators whose occupancy rights had been recorded in the settlement misl as absolute.

The number of tenants with absolute right of occupancy amounts to 46,073. Those whose position rests solely on 12 years' occupation, and whose right is thus only conditional, amount to 3,160.

Tenants-at-will.

213. The last and lowest class consisted of all who were not deemed worthy of a place in the two preceding categories, and who, having no rights to support them, sank to the bottom. These *tenants-at-will* or unprotected tenants may of course have a large addition to their number from the ranks of the "conditional" members of class II, if any essential alteration be made in Act X of 1859, the foundation on which their present position stands. Their number is 245,162.

Adjustment of rents.

214. As regarded the *tenants*, the adjustment of rents was a detailed assessment effected by the landholder of each field on his estates. They had been informed of the amount of revenue which they would have to pay to Government for the next 30 years; it now remained for them to determine after a full consideration of their position and interests, how much they would assess on their tenants: but to compare small things with great, the landholder now did for each field of his estate what the settlement officer had been doing for each estate of the district. In this assessment the landholder was to some extent limited. The provisions of Act X were very clear as regards the position and privileges of a tenant with right of occupancy; and according to the principles of that Act, the settlement officer or his assistant had to be guided in deciding any dispute which arose between the landlord and any tenant thus protected in regard to the rent to be assessed on him. Over the tenant-at-will, the landlord had full power, and he

could raise the rent to any extent, and turn the tenant out if he liked; but for many reasons the adjustment of rents in the Wurdah district, was not attended with any very great hardship or difficulty.

Manner of adjustment of rents.

215. The principle impressed upon the Settlement Department was to allow rents to adjust themselves as much as possible. All the cultivators of a village, accompanied by their landlords or their representatives, appeared on a certain day at the camp of the settlement officer or his assistant and then the adjustment of rents took place. No parties were better fitted to make this adjustment or detailed assessment of the village lands than the landholder himself and his tenants. To none were the advantages or inferiority of certain lands better known than to those who had passed the greater part of their lives on the spot, and who were thoroughly acquainted with the capabilities not only of their own fields, but of every field in the village. Any decision arrived at in an amicable manner by the parties most interested, would give general satisfaction and work smoothly, and hence the advisability of leaving the arrangement as much as possible to the landlord and his tenants. Before "the village," *i. e.*, the landlord and his tenants came up before the settlement officer for the final adjustment of the rents, the rights of all parties would first be explained, and perhaps one or two enquiries into claims by cultivators to be recorded proprietors of their holdings or tenants with right of occupancy would be made. The whole village, with the landholder and his Pandiah or secretary at the head, would then adjourn to the shade of some wide spreading tree, and there discuss in council, for hours, the rent that each tenant was to pay. There the subject would be discussed openly before an extremely well-informed assembly, and a man who had perhaps hitherto escaped easily, and whose rent the landlord was anxious to raise, would perhaps after much discussion be obliged to admit the fairness of the demand and would give in gracefully. The greater part of the cases would in this manner be filtered through what nearly acted as a successful Punchayet. Another very powerful influence was at work which prevented any great rapacity on the part of landholder, and any undue obstinacy on the part of the tenant. Private interests taught each one well enough, how much one could safely ask, and how much it would be worth the while of the other to give. Even the tenant-at-will was abundantly protected. In Wurdah where on all sides lands are plentiful, where as a general rule tenants, not fields, are at a premium, the landholder counting his riches by his tenants, was not likely to disgust them or to force them to move elsewhere by demanding unfair rents. Their mutual good sense and interests enabled them to come to an agreement which was fair enough to both parties, and thus at the end of the day very few contested cases would remain over. Where neither side would give in, the case would be decided judicially on its merits. These were of course confined to cases in which the tenant had a right of occupancy. The instances in which the settlement officer had to interfere were not very numerous, and, as a rule, the adjustment of rents went

Interference of the settlement officer not generally called for.

on smoothly and amicably enough. The cases in which real difficulties arose were in villages the proprietary right in which had been divided between rival claimants, and where quarrels and disputes gave a bad tone to the whole village and to the tenantry.

Enhancements effected.

216. The percentage resulting on the adjustment of rents is not very great. It is certainly small in proportion to the rise in the price of all agricultural produce; it is perhaps not as great as the landlord might with safety demand, but there have been many causes at work militating against a rise in rents.

Causes militating against great rise in rents.

217. I think that perhaps one of the first causes was the disposition of the Hindoo landholders to cling to the associations of the past, and a superstitious fear which suggested that any innovation might be attended with danger. I am not inclined to believe that rents were ever fixed in the general meaning of the word, *i. e.*, that the tenants possessed any recognised right to hold at unchanged rates, but the circumstances of the times were rather against much change taking place.

Superstitious feeling of the landholders.

218. A farmer, in order to keep his tenants together, was glad enough to let them hold on easy terms so long as he collected, without difficulty, enough to pay the Government demand, and to cover the expense of the management of the village. For himself, he trusted chiefly to the profits of his own farm. Thus, in old days, tenants got off easily enough. During the first few years of British administration, every thing was in an uneasy state; commencement of settlement operations was awaited, enhancements of rents were not made. The settlement found the tenants with rents which, though the landholder had never surrendered the privilege of enhancing, had, from the force of circumstances, remained unchanged for years. When the settlement came, the landholders, at first, did not fully appreciate their power, even where they did, the fear already mentioned had some effect. They felt, so many landlords have explained to me, that they had been immensely fortunate. Had not their position been improved by an equable assessment fixed for a long period, and by the bestowal of proprietary right? Under these circumstances, it would not have been considered moral or fair, many have assured me, to have profited unduly by this good fortune, and not to have permitted the tenants to have shared it with them. And if they enhanced their rents very considerably, and departed from the ancient order of things, there was always this terrible lingering suspicion. Was not the whole system new, did they altogether understand, or could they thoroughly trust in these new arrangements, seemingly so favorable in their terms, and bestowing a right of which even the most sanguine had never dreamed? and if they did not behave charitably to their tenants, might they not be overtaken by some Nemesis that might follow the mysterious proceedings of the settlement? This feeling had, at least so I have been told over and over again, something to do with the comparatively small enhancement effected in the rents of Wurdah.

219. Yet another reason was that there were many landholders who could not easily dissuade themselves that the adjustment of rents had not something to do with a further revision of assessment. There were many who could not realize, that the assessment made long before the adjustment of rents was commeneed, was in reality to remain unchanged for 30 years, and they feared that any enhancement of rents would be certainly to entail a corresponding increase in the assessment. For this reason, some landholders altogether concealed from the Settlement Department the fact of their having raised the rents of their tenants. An amusing instance of this came to my knowledge whilst on tour. One landholder, thinking himself very wise in his generation came to a private understanding with his tenants, that they were to raise their rents all round at the rate of 2 Annas in the Rupee, or 12½ per cent., but on no account was this increase to be shown in the settlement papers at Khewut. The tenants agreed to this, and the record was prepared without difficulty, never was so well ordered and contented a tenantry seen, no squabbles about rent delayed the native assistants, and the record of this village was completed in a manner apparently most satisfactory to all parties. But when the time for the payment of the rents according to the enhanced rate came, the tenants, whose rents had been entered in the settlement papers according to the old and low rates, had grown too knowing for their master, and on being called upon to pay, expressed their determination to stand by the settlement record. The man was so taken aback, and considered himself so much aggrieved, that he put in a formal petition, praying that the adjustment of rents might be commenced in his village 'de novo.' But though he himself got no satisfaction in this respect from the settlement officer, he and his case were a standing joke in the district for some time, and served as an excellent example to quote to landholders of the absurdity of distrusting the repeated promises of the British Government, and of attempting by unworthy tricks to baffle the enquires of the Settlement Department. There were, then, again others who, without any superstitious fear, were perhaps induced, by old associations and ideas, to consider that it was not quite the proper thing to make any great profit out of their tenant's rents. From an examination of several series of village accounts, which have come up before me in cases of dispute amongst brethren for shares, and in which the genuineness of the accounts have been admitted by the contesting parties, I have been much struck with the fact that in old days rents seemed just to clear the Government demand and to cover the village expenses. In no case that I have seen did they afford any tangible profit to the farmer. The principle of the farmer seems to have been to live and to let live. The tenants were perhaps well off, but then was he not himself well off? was he not, in fact, in a position immensely superior to any of his tenants, having the choice of and holding the very best fields in the village, and paying a rent almost nominal? Did not these fields return him abundant profit? and so long as the collections from the tenants defrayed the Government demand, and enabled him to pay the village servants, and to provide for the contingent expenses of the village, why should he attempt to enlarge his profits by what to him, as an agriculturalist, did

Apprehension of increased assessments.

not perhaps appear altogether legitimate means? I am referring here to what I believe was the feeling and practice among the farmers purely agricultural; men belonging to old cultivating families, whose tenantry included many relations; and old and attached families of cultivators. The farmer who had no connection or permanent interest in the village, and who only held for a season, would see matters under a very different aspect. He would screw as much as he possibly could out of the village, and the screw would be clogged by no sentiment. But the best and most powerful obstacle to a rise in rents, in any way in proportion to the increased profits of the tenant, is the rule of supply and demand, which has been the chief cause of rents remaining at a comparatively low level. The population is indisputably scant;—of land, whether it is in the neighbouring province of Berar, or in Wurdah itself, or in fertile but uncultivated Chanda, there is abundance. An exodus of a village full of Koonbees from the Wurdah would be hailed with delight by the Chanda landholders, who trust for profits to the many little indirect means too well known to a Chanda proprietor. He would give the Koonbees fields free of rent, land being plentiful. Tenants being scarce, they are at a high premium in the market, and could no doubt get lands cheaper elsewhere than those they hold in Wurdah. But the Koonbee has a cat-like affection for his lands, and will not part from them save as a last resource. The mutual interest of landlord and tenant have resulted in an equable adjustment of the demand, favorable enough to the one, but still sufficiently remunerative to the other. The increase of population and the decrease in an inverse ratio of the uuculturable area, feeling of security of tenure, and a better appreciation of their own rights and powers, will, doubtless, in the course of a few years, operate to swell the rent-roll of the Wurdah landholders.

Position of the different classes of cultivators.

220. The foregoing paragraphs will have shown the different classes of cultivators, and will have explained the position of each class, and the advantages which each position commanded at the adjustment of rents. I have tried to make this report, as nearly as posible, a report of the settlement proceedings, by arranging the subjects according to order in which each step of the settlement operations was taken up. I have thus placed the investigations into claims to proprietary rights in villages in chapters. For the sake of comparison, it might have conveniently preceded the paragraphs which refer to the enquiries into the rights of the cultivators. I think when the manner in which the ex-Malgoozars have been dealt with, and the position that has been assigned, according to their merits, to the various classes of tenants is considered, it will be seen that the interests of all classes have been carefully guarded alike. As regards the landholder himself, his position no doubt is a very favorable one. It may be argued that the system which permits these middlemen to eat up a large share of the payments made by the cultivators, which, under a ryotwaree settlement, would go into the coffers of the Government, is a system, whatever effects it may have on the landholder's interest, unfair to the interests of the State; but I believe the answer to this

argument would be that the system is not one improvised or invented at all by us; it is the system that we found in force, and which we are morally bound to uphold. I hope it will also be seen that, although valuable rights have been bestowed on this class, the benefits have not been bestowed at the expense of the rights of the cultivators. For those who are in favor of a ryotwar settlement, it will be seen that, wherever a cultivator could make out a good case, he was made proprietor of his holding, and that in fact what is positively a ryotwar settlement has been made with 775 cultivators, holding 20,886 acres of the best cultivated lands in Wurdah. Nor were the cultivators of some standing whose position did not quite entitle them to rank in the superior class left unprotected. The names of the tenants with right of occupancy have been carefully recorded. As to those of the III class, who have no absolute or permanent title, they again are sufficiently protected by the present condition of the Wurdah, district, which places their services at a premium in the market, and secures them against any unfair treatment at the hands of their landlord. As regards the two last classes, I am not sure that it is not much better for them that they should remain in their present position, and that they should not be made Malik Mukboozahs, and independent of their landholders. In rich tracts where civilisaton has advanced, the cultivator may have sufficiently progressed to be fit to stand alone. But with us only the higher class of cultivators are, I believe, sufficiently forward to profit by this privilege. They have already been provided for as Malik Mukboozahs, and there is every hope that they will do well. But for the lower classes of cultivators, I am inclined to think that the continuance of their connection with the landholder will be to their advantage. A landholder, if he is worth his salt, is a great deal more than the collector of rents, and the devourer of the profits made out of his tenants. He is what would be called in Bengal the "Muneeb" or protector and patron, in an agricultural sense, of the dwellers in his estate; and upon him the tenants depend, in a multitude of matters of every-day life, for encouragement, for assistance, and for support, which a great many of the lower class of the cultivators in Wurdah could not afford to live without. The landholder would look upon the Malik Mukboozah as no child of his; and if the larger number of cultivators were unduly large, the influence of the landholder over his tenants, which I believe may be made to yield very favorable results, would be altogether lost.

Record right investigations.

221. At Khewut too was prepared the measurement papers or record of shareholders, which gives its name to what is known as "Khewut operations;" when proprietary right claims were investigated and decided, the claims of the brethren of a landholder, to share with him the estate, were not as a rule enquired into. These investigations were deferred until "Khewut operations," when the settlement establishment would be on the spot; and when such claims could obviously best be considered and determined. I doubt whether the people of the district were sufficiently alive at first to the importance of having their shares in family estates admitted and recorded. Steps were however taken for preventing just claims being overlooked and left unrecognized

and in the revisions that were made late in the day, consequent on the issue of Circular G, pains were taken to make shareholders alive to their rights, and to record shares carefully. Many claims hotly contested were the result. As a rule, where it was proved that a member of a brotherhood, who might *prima facie* appear to be entitled to a share, had not for years shared the risk, or participated in the profits, he was not admitted to a share in the estate, but was declared proprietor of the holdings which he had held up to that time in lieu of a share. The number of shares declared amounted to 49.

Appointment of Lumberdars.

222. Another, and to the people all important, proceeding at "Khewut" was the appointment of Lumberdars. Very unnecessary importance was, as a rule, attached by the shareholders to the appointment, not on account of its emoluments, position, or power, but simply from the fact that it secured the entry of the name of its holder in the pottah. This arose from an old feeling of insecurity of tenure imbibed under a native government. Although the landholders had been told, over and over again, that their estates, or their shares in estates, had now been conferred on them in perpetuity, and that the only change that would hereafter take place, would be in the revenue to be paid on their estates, still many clung tenaciously to the old pottah, and to their names being entered in it, as the only means of securing an indisputable right in their shares. In old days, the pottah was to them everything, it was to them the only paper connected with the settlement which they understood, or in which they had any faith. It was the only record of a man's incumbency, or of the existence of his share in the village. At any investigations that have taken place, it has always been in the power of one who was in reality, only the Lumberdar to attempt to ignore the claims of his brethren, and to refer to the pottah in which his name was entered. And it was difficult to persuade the people that the settlement record contained a paper in which the interest of all the shareholders were detailed, and which would be sufficient to rebut any plea (founded solely on the pottah) that might be set up hereafter by the Lumberdar, to the effect that he was the sole proprietor of the estate. By degrees as this was understood, less anxiety was evinced about the pottah and the appointment of Lumberdars.

Mistaken notion of the importance of the appointment.

223. In making the selection and fixing the number of Lumberdars, the instructions of the Settlement Code were followed. When the feeling of the community was in favor of a larger body of representatives, the management was not limited to one Lumberdar, and as a rule one Lumberdar was appointed for each Section or Puttee, or separate interest in the estate.

Lumberdars appointed to represent each separate interest in the estate.

224. In contested claims for the appointment of Lumberdar, the position of the candidates, their authority in the village, and other points were duly weighed, but I have often found a general election to be a very effective and popular manner of choosing

Public election of Lumberdars resorted to in some cases.

representatives. All the shareholders were called together, and each was provided with a piece of money representing, in a fraction of the rupee, the share held by him in the estate, and the votes were duly polled. The candidate or candidates, according to number of vacancies, in whose favor the larger sums were polled, were declared elected. Allowing each man's vote to count according to the interest held by him in the village, was, I think, a fairer means of polling, than if the number of individual votes had been taken. For by the latter means, a number of shareholders holding infinitesimal shares might swamp a candidate supported by those who had a large interest in estate, and whose wishes were on that account the more deserving of consideration.

Mukta and Mokassa enquiries.

225. The enquiries into the rights of Maafeedars to rent-free plots, and of the landholders who held villages on Mukta and Mokasa tenure were commenced early in the day, but the revised orders contained in the Settlement Code necessitated a reconsideration of the orders originally passed. Final orders have not been received in regard to the recommendations submitted, but the number of maafee holdings recommended to be retained by the settlement officer is 25.

The Mokassa and Mukta villages.

226. Of the Mokassa villages held entirely free of revenue, two belong to the Rajah of Deor. The revenue assessable on them amounts to Rs. 900. The villages held by the same native nobleman on Mukta or "quit-rent" tenure are 22 in number, the quit-rent being Rs. 13,410-10-11; the full amount assessable being Rs. 18,345.

The holdings of the village priests.

227. In accordance with recent instructions, the Jotshees or village priests, who hold considerable plots of land have also been confirmed in their holdings for their lives.

Finishing operations of the settlement.

228. I have now only to allude to one or two important operations which were carried out towards the close of the settlement work, with a brief notice of which I will close this report.

Demarcation of excess waste lands.

229. One of the most important of these measures was the exclusion, from village areas, of excess waste lands under the well known rules of Book Circular LXXII of 1862. In accordance with the instructions contained in that Circular, it was explained to the landholders that Government only bestowed proprietary right in cultivated land; a liberal proportion of waste, generally 200 acres per cent. on the cultivated area, would also be given; but where large jungle tracts existed, to bring which under cultivation no attempt had been made, the Government would not relinquish its rights, but would keep that jungle, and try and make the best arrangements possible for bringing it under cultivation. In all estates then, in which the waste was found to exceed 200 per cent. on the cultivation, the excess land was marked off and made into what was called a Government chuk.

230. This was not a very heavy duty in my part of the Wurdah district. Excess jungle was demarcated in only seven villages of Wurdah. In my division of Nagpore, the number will be given by Mr. Ross. The plots for sale under the waste land rules in my settlement of the old Wurdah district are situated in the Anjee pergunnah. They are near the line of railway, and should prove valuable. The Nagpore lands are equally favorably situated; some have, I understand, already been sold. Registers of these lands with maps and full particulars have been given to the Deputy Commissioner; and as they have already been printed and published in the *Government Gazette*, it is hardly desirable to hamper this report with any detailed account of them.

Plots for sale under waste land rules.

231. The arrangements for preparing the village papers were also a subject which early received the attention of the Settlement Department. Putwarees and Putwary circles existed in Wurdah district, but they were of our introduction. It was determined it should be optional with the landholders to retain their village accountant, or make their own arrangements for preparing and submitting their papers; and this resolution was notified to the landholders of the Wurdah district several times in Durbar. The consequence is that the greater majority of the landholders have determined to make their own arrangements and to dispense with the Putwarees. Even where a Putwaree is kept on, he is *not* a Putwaree in the sense he was before; he is not a semi-Government servant, who can receive his dues through the tehseeldar, but he is a servant of the landholder who can make his own arrangements with him. For my part, I believe this change, although it will doubtless cause some little inconvenience to district officers at first, will be productive eventually of much good. The Putwarees were always a go-between Government and the landholders. Educated and clever, they were like a priesthood, which, wishing to keep all authority in its own hands, kept the landholders as much as possible in darkness and ignorance; all Government orders filtered through the Putwaree. He was generally the channel of communication between the landholder and the tehseeldar. To the tehseeldar he was doubtless useful, and so was he indirectly useful to the district officer at preparing returns:—he was doubtless very good, and his loss, I fear, will be much felt when these returns have to be prepared by the clumsy agency of the landholders. But, to counterbalance this, we have what I believe will prove a great advantage, the removal of the title between the Government and the landholders, who, under the new system, are the responsible and important persons. Brought in contact with their tehseeldars and district officers, and having to look to and understand their own affairs, instead of being dependant on the Putwarees, the landholder class will improve in intelligence and usefulness; and if this object be attained, I think that the temporary inconvenience that may ensue by the loss of

Arrangements for the preparation of village papers.

Putwaree no longer retained as Government servant.

Advantages that will follow by the change.

the Putwarees will be cheerfully borne. The landholders are, I know, glad to get rid of the Putwaree. He was, or pretended to be, a servant of both Government and the landholder, and he was the efficient servant of neither—always playing one off against the other. Often, when the tehseeldar wanted his assistance, village work was an excuse; when the landholder craved his assistance, the Putwaree would flout in his face his position as a Government servant as he claimed to be. I think the order in regard to Putwarees is most popular in the district, save among a few men who have lost employment; and these men have only themselves to blame. Wherever a Putwaree has done his work well, he has invariably been kept on by the landholder. It is only where a man was idle, or too independant, or useless, that he has not been provided for by the landholder.

Printed instructons and hints to landholders.

232. To ensure the correct preparation of the annual papers, I have taken several precautions. Forms of the papers, together with short hints and instructions, have been printed off and distributed to the landholders, when making over to them copies of their settlement misl. A superintendent and two selected men have been deputed to superintend the correct preparation of the papers.

Status of the Kotwars fixed.

233. As some apprehension was entertained that proper arrangements were not being made to protect the village Kotwars, by recording the privileges and rights which they enjoyed, strict orders were issued in 1863 to the settlement officers. I think that in Wurdah their position and perquisites will be found to have been satisfactorily defined. They have been sufficiently protected against any unfair treatment at the hands of a capricious landholder, although at the same time nothing has been done to allow him to imagine himself independent of the landholder, or to cause any disturbance in the relations which ought to exist between master and servant.

Re-arrangement of revenue instalments.

234. Lastly, the system of the payment of the instalments of Government revenue has been revised. The payments were found in some cases to fall very inconveniently heavy on the cultivator. The landholder, according to immemorial usage, seldom collects until a short time before the kist or instalment was due. If the kist fell due, and enough of the collection was made, at a time when the ryot had not cut his corps, or had not realized the value of them, then he had to borrow money to pay the rent then due, and thus indeed, by an inconvenient system of kist-paying, the ryot's rent was practically enhanced by the sum he had to pay as interest on the money borrowed. A complete new arrangement of kists has now been made, and these kists being regulated by the particular crops the villages grow, and the time at which they fall due, a very equitable and considerate arrangement for the ryot has been made.

Cost of Wurdah settlement.

235. The total cost of the settlement operations in Wurdah up to 31st August 1866 has been Rs. 1,79,954. A very large part of this sum is made up of the share charged against Wurdah, of the

expenses of settlement operations when Nagpore and Wurdah districts were one. These operations commenced as far back as November 1857, and as they were the first of the kind ever attempted in these provinces, they were necessarily rather expensive. The Nagpore settlement appears in its early days to have consisted of a head quarter establishment, by which arrangements were made for carrying out settlement operations in the old Nagpore province. This sum includes the price of getting up misls for the landholders. As a considerable sum has been recovered from landholders on this account, the actual cost of settlement operations in Wurdah will be proportionately reduced.

Mention of Officers in charge.

236. I have already mentioned the names of gentlemen who were connected before my time with the Wurdah settlement. Mr., now the Honorable, R. S. Eills, Mr. A. B. Ross. Mr. H. J. MacGeorge, and Mr. C. E. Bernard. What share of the work fell to these officers is well known to the Chief Commissioner and to yourself; of the officers who have served with me, I would mention the names of Lieutenant Saurin Brooke, Assistant Settlement Officer, who, before he left for Chanda, rendered me very efficient aid in the Wurdah settlement, and of Lieutenant Sartorius, Assistant Settlement Officer, who, although he joined me only lately, in the month of July last, has been of great assistance in helping me to complete the work of the Wurdah settlement. Of the native ministerial officers who served under me, Superintendent Shunker Lall was undoubtedly a man of considerable ability, and did his work carefully and ably—towards the close of the settlement he lost his health, and his sudden departure has been of considerable inconvenience. My Serishtadar, Ram Chunder Bulwunt, has worked most heartily and zealously and I am glad that his services have been recognized by promotion to the rank of Superintendent of Settlement.

Notice of assistants.

Conclusion.

237. In conclusion I would express by hope that the settlement will be found to work well. The Chief Commissioner and you, yourself, who have on many occasions been through the Wurdah district, have been pleased to bear testimony to the contentment which prevails among the agricultural class with the result of the settlement operation. I think too that all classes have now begun to realize what settlement operations mean;—and I believe that nearly all the disputes that the advent of the settlement must suggest have been settled. The objects and the effects of the settlement have been constantly explained to the landholder class by the Chief Commissioner himself in Durbar; by yourself, by the Deputy Commissioner, settlement officer, and other officials going through the district, and with whom the people of the district are now brought into close contact.

"Litera scripta manent" is a proverb in more force in a country where education is advanced than it has in this part of India. Here what is said in Durbar is more telling, and remains in the memory of the people much more lastingly than written proclamations; and the

good effect of the full manner in which the settlement operations have been discussed in Durbar will, I am sure, be lasting.

Statement of appeals referred to in para. 153 *of the report.*

Appeals to	From Superintendent.	From Assistant Settlement Officer.	From Settlement Officer.	From Settlement Commissioner.	Total.	Decisions upheld: Of Superintendent.	Of Assistant Settlement Officer.	Of Settlement Officer.	Of Settlement Commissioner.	Total.
Settlement Officer	298	57	...	...	...	193	42	...	...	...
Settlement Commissioner	...	...	80	...	...	...	...	59	15	...
Chief Commissioner	...	...	...	17	452	...	...	...	...	309

Statement showing the results of the comparison of areas between the Professional Survey and the Settlement field Measurement.

Pergunnahs.	Professional survey areas.	Settlement survey areas.	Difference in Professional Survey. Increase.	Decrease.	
Anjee	1,80,311	1,98,559	...	18,248	
Undoree	1,00,837	1,00,504	333	...	
Baila	1,58,753	1,87,241	31,512	...	
Hingunghat	1,62,798	1,83,388	...	20,590	
Nachengaon	1,76,852	1,73,276	3,076	...	
Pohona	1,34,423	1,32,640	1,783	...	
Pownar	1,04,654	1,05,480	...	826	
			26,704	39,664	Net difference 12,960 acres.

[ORDERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.]

From SIR W. MUIR, K.C.S.I., *Foreign Secretary, to* J. H. MORRIS, Esq., *Officiating Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces—(No. 309, dated Simla, the 4th October 1867.)*

I am directed by His Excellency the Governor General in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your Secretary's letter No. 3748-342, dated 13th ultimo, submitting the report of the land revenue settlement of the Wurdah district, and to communicate the following orders and observations thereon :—

2. The early and preparatory stages of this settlement bear the marks of the assistance rendered by Mr. R. S. Ellis, of Madras. By him the school for Putwaries was established, and by him, also, the salutary rule laid down that the records of measurement and occupancy were to be in the vernacular character of the district.

3. The small amount of irrigated land in this district, about one-half per cent., is remarkable ; and the more so as wheat covers no less than 24 per cent. of the cultivated area, and water is said to be available within 15 or 20 feet of the surface.

4. His Excellency in Council notes that Mr. Bernard estimates the out-turn of an acre sowed with 50lbs. of wheat to be eight-fold for unirrigated land.

5. His Excellency in Council has perused the account of the agriculture, population, and circumstances of this district, as given by Mr. Bernard, and amply supplemented by Mr. Rivett-Carnac, with much interest.

6. His Excellency in Council entirely approves the principles on which the recognition and conferment of proprietary rights have been based. It is very satisfactory to find that, in carrying out the orders on this head, out of 988 estates, the title of incumbent farmers was contested in only 354 estates. In 130 cases only, were the claims of parties out of possession admitted ; and of 81 persons ousted, no one had been in possession for so long as 12 years.

7. Upon paragraph 201, the same remark occurs to His Excellency in Council as was made on the Baitool settlement, namely, that the settlement officer appears to recognize too little weight in favor of the ancient cultiva-

tors as compared with the weak proprietary claim of the "farmer malgoozars." Nevertheless, the result has been here more favorable for the tenants, there having been, out of 245,162 cultivators, as many as 15,644 declared peasent proprietors, under the (rather misleading) title of "Malik *Mukbooza*;" and there are, besides, nearly 50,000 cultivators with heriditary rights. His Excellency in Council regards this result as satisfactory.

8. In reference to paragraph 208, on the principle of assessing the demand on the present proprietors, His Excellency in Council remarks that these assessments were of course rightly made in reference to the special capacities of each holding, and not necessarily at the product of the revenue rates in the village at large, unless those rates were found to be applicable to the case in hand. The village rates are of necessity *average* and theoritical rates, and His Excellency in Council does not understand ho doubts werew ever entertained on the subject.

9. Mr. Bernard's explanation of the grounds of his assessments shows that the demand was worked out in each case by that officer with care and judgment. But Mr. Carnac in drawing up the report should have shown the result in one collected statement for the whole district. The tabular statements appended to the report are also very meagre. It is always useful and convenient to have full statistical details of the settlement in a tabular form.

10. The new assessment, including the demand on resumed maafce lands, gives an increase of but five thousand Rupees, and now stands at Rupees 4,16,345. It falls at the at the rate of only nine annas and seven pie per cultivated acre, although the district is shown to be a fertile and flourishing one. Nevertheless, His Excellency in Council is willing to believe that Mr. Bernard exercised a proper discretion in refraining from taking a higher increase.

11. His Excellency in Council has been pleased to confirm the settlement for 30 years.

12. His Excellency in Council begs that a careful watch be kept on the working of the arrangements for Putwaries. It is stated that the 'circle' system was originally introduced; but it has been superseded by an order which places the Putwaries absolutely at the proprietor's mercy, who may even dispense entirely with the services of any

Putwary. The remarks of Mr. Carnac do not show that he has weighed this subject with care from both points of view. It is mentioned, as an argument in favor of the measure, that "the land-holders are, he knows, glad to get rid of the Putwary." This is, perhaps, on their part, natural; but it might be questioned whether the ryots equally approve the change. In their interest it will require to be most carefully watched.

13. His Excellency in Council concurs with Sir R. Temple in applauding the intelligence and ability with which Mr. Bernard has framed this settlement. The acknowledgments of Government are also due for the care with which Mr. R. Carnac has completed the records and prepared the report. The services of Mr McGeorge and Lieutenants Brooke and Startorius as Assistant Settlement Officers are also favorably regarded.

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on 01 February, 2020